

penguin eggs

Issue No. 13

Spring 2002



James Keelaghan

**Danú
Lynn Miles
Critics' Poll
Ian Tamblyn
Mercedes Sosa
Strictly Mundial
Jesse Winchester
Carter & Grammer
Wyckham Porteous
Fairport Convention
Michael Jerome Browne**

Album of the Year

DAVID FRANCEY



FAR END OF SUMMER

**Harry Manx favourite
discovery of 2001**



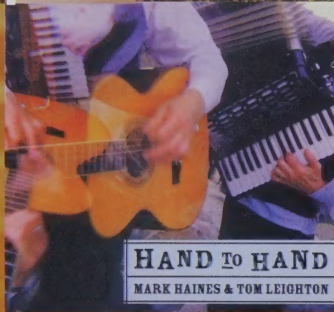
New releases!

Mark Haines & Tom Leighton

Hand to Hand BCD136

Singers and multi-instrumentalists par excellence, Mark Haines and Tom Leighton combine traditional and original repertoire influenced by their Celtic, Maritime and North American folk roots. Hand to Hand features seven original songs and includes traditional arrangements as well as interpretations of tunes by Bob Dylan, Stompin' Tom Connors and John Prine.

"Together [they] play a red-hot and glowing version of the Orange Blossom Special, driving the crowd insane with pleasure."
The Chronicle-Herald, Halifax



HAND TO HAND
MARK HAINES & TOM LEIGHTON

James Gordon

with Sandy Horne

James Gordon with Sandy Horne

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"It is the range and depth of Gordon's songs that is so special, honed to perfection."

Detour Magazine, Great Britain

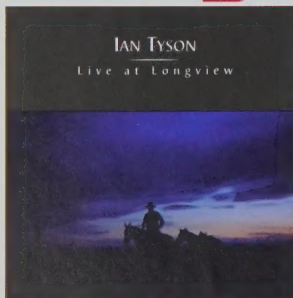
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Live at
Longview

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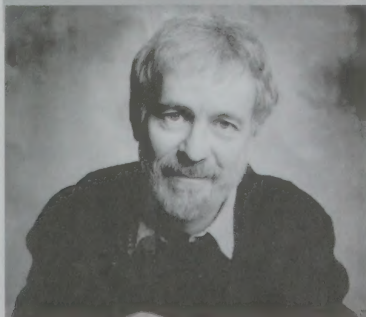
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This magazine takes its name from Nic Jones' wonderful *Penguin Eggs* – a collection of mainly traditional British folk songs revitalized with extraordinary flair and ingenuity. Released in Britain in 1980, it has grown into a source of inspiration for such young, gifted performers as Kate Rusby and Eliza Carthy. Nic, sadly, suffered horrific injuries in a car crash in 1982. He has never fully recovered and now seldom performs. His care and respect shown for the tradition and prudence to recognize the merits of innovation makes *Penguin Eggs* such an outrageously fine recording. This magazine strives to reiterate that spirit. Nic Jones' *Penguin Eggs* is available through Topic Records in Europe and Shanachie in North America

– Penguin Eggs is Printed in Canada –

Jesse Winchester



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Danú



Mercedes Sosa



Charts

Black Swan Top 10

- | | |
|---|-------------------------|
| 1 Tri-Continental
(Tradition & Modern Musik) | Live |
| 2 Pierre Bensusan
(Dadgad) | Intuite |
| 3 La Bottine Souriante
(Milles Pattes) | Cordial |
| 4 Danú
(Shanachie) | All Things Considered |
| 5 Christy Moore
(Sony) | This Is The Day |
| 6 James Keelaghan
(Jericho Beach) | Home |
| 7 Temple of Sound & Bizwan Muazzam
(Real World) | Peoples Colony |
| 8 Michael Jerome Browne
(Borealis) | Drive On |
| 9 Earnest Ranglin
(Studio One) | Sounds Of Power |
| 10 Various Artists
(Soul And Jazz) | Saturday Night Fish Fry |

Compiled from Dec. and Jan. sales: Black Swan Records, 3209 West Broadway, Vancouver, BC

Megatunes Top 15

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| 1 The Co-Dependents
(Indelible) | Live Recording |
| 2 Alison Krauss
(Rounder) | New Favorite |
| 3 Ryan Adams
(Lost Highway) | Gold |
| 4 Steve Pineo
(Indelible) | A Perfectly Good Friendship |
| 5 Steve Earle, Townes Van Zandt, Guy Clark
(American Original) | Live At The Bluebird |
| 6 Harry Manx
(Northern Blues) | Dog my Cat |
| 7 Gillian Welch
(Stony Plain) | Time (The Revelator) |
| 8 Karl Roth
(Peermusic) | Almost Behavin |
| 9 Various Artists
(Mercury) | O Brother Where Art Thou? |
| 10 Stacey Earle & Mark Stuart
(Gearle) | Must Be Live |
| 11 Pete Yorn
(Sony) | Musicformorningafter |
| 12 Femi Kuti
(MCA) | Fight To Win |
| 13 Various Artists
(Pedermales) | Poet: A Tribute To Townes Van Zandt |

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 14 Mano Chao
(Virgin) | Proxima Estacion Esperanza |
| 15 Hank Williams III
(Curb) | Lovesick, Broke & Driftin' |

Compiled from January sales: Megatunes: 932 17th Ave., S.W. Calgary, Alberta.

Mundial Music Pool Top 20

- | | |
|---|-----------------------|
| 1 Trio Mocoto
(Six Degrees) | Samba Rock |
| 2 Issa Bagayogo
(Six Degrees) | Timbuktu |
| 3 Ishmael Lo
(Universal) | Dabah |
| 4 El Hadj N'Diaye
(World Village/S.R.I.) | XEL |
| 5 Juan Pablo Torres
(Universal) | Son Que Ch*vere |
| 6 Djelimady Tounkara
(Indigo) | Signi |
| 7 Gigi
(Palm Pictures) | Gigi |
| 8 D'Gary
(Indigo) | Akato Meso |
| 9 Femi Kuti
(Universal) | Fight To Win |
| 10 Alpha Yaya Diallo
(Jericho Beach Music) | The Journey |
| 11 Valleson
(Caribou) | Son de Cuba |
| 12 Toronto Tabla Ensemble
(Naxos) | Weaving |
| 13 Dhol Foundation
(EMI) | Big Drum: Small World |
| 14 Nakim
(MondoMelodia) | The Lion Roars |
| 15 Mory Kante
(Sono/Nuff) | Tamala |
| 16 Soad Massi
(Universal) | Raoui |
| 17 Laito Jr. & Laito Sr
(Ahi Nama/Nuff) | Siempres Juntos |
| 18 Papa Wemba
(Sono/Nuff) | Bakala Dia Kuba |
| 19 Quartango
(Justin Time/Fusion 3) | Macadam Tango |
| 20 Mama Sissoko
(Tinder/Festival) | Soleil de Minuit |

Compiled in February by The Mundial Music Pool, which consists of 26 programmers, music critics and others involved in the promotion of world music across Canada.

News

Despite a \$100,000 debt, plans for Victoria's third Rootsfest are well underway. It will run August 16 – 18 under the guidance of new artistic director, **Doug Cox**. Cox has replaced festival founder **Jamie Kelly**.

"We are a \$100,000 in debt but that's not insurmountable," says Cox. "This is not the first time a folk festival has been this far in debt. Calgary had the same problem several years ago and it survived and is doing well. We have a great board determined to make this work."

Rootsfest initially ran in mid-July but Cox has moved it to August to avoid clashing with several other local folk festivals and anticipated more favourable weather patterns. Last year, rain fell heavily for three days and wiped out any potential last minute walk-up at the box office. Cox will also continue as artistic director of Vancouver Island Music Fest', July 5-7. Rootsfest will reduce its world music content and concentrate on North American roots, says Cox. Other local events promote sufficient world music, he explains.

Performers booked for Rootsfest to date include, **America, Guy Clark, Archie Fisher, Johnny Nicholas & Freddy Domino, Jeff Healey, Martyn Joseph, Stephen Fearing, and Reggae Cowboys**. Musicfest has **Bruce Cockburn, Freddie Roulette, Sonny Rhodes, Painting Daisies, Gillian Frame and Eileen Lavery**.

★★★

And talking about Saskatoon's Eileen Lavery. . . Ireland's celebrated singer, **Mary Black**, appears quite taken with her. Black requested Lavery open for her during a recent

mid-winter Irish tour. Black also recorded Lavery's *Wildest Dreams on The Best Of Mary Black: 1991-2001*. The album was released in Europe in October, 2001, and has been the top selling album in Ireland since the second week of its release. Originally from Belfast, N. Ireland, Lavery began her musical career with the Saskatoon Celtic band, **Siamsa**, before leaving in 1996 to pursue a solo career. Her debut, *Dancing With Angels*, won a Prairie Music Award in 2000 for Outstanding Roots Recording.

★★★

Maria Dunn also enjoyed recent good fortune in Europe. Besides a glowing review *For A Song* in *Roots* magazine, she appeared at Celtic Connections at The Royal Concert Hall, Glasgow, with **Archie Fisher**. She appeared on Fisher's BBC Scotland radio show, *Travelling Folk*. He has been covering Dunn's *Take It Easy On Me* live, and invited Dunn to join him, **Dick Gaughan, Brian McNeill and John Herald** on stage. "Needless to say, I was absolutely thrilled to be on stage with some of my long time Celtic music heroes," said Dunn on her return to Edmonton.

★★★

Mad Pudding have recruited **Karla Mundy** to replace recently departed accordionist/vocalist **Amy Stephen**. Mundy, who sang on **David Francey's** current disc, *Far End Of Summer*, is also a member of up and coming Vancouver Celtic combo, **Cleia**. To compliment this shift, **Andy Hillhouse**, Mad Pudding's guitarist and singer has joined Cleia to replace recently departed guitar player **Paul**

Hawtin.

Still in Vancouver, **The Paperboys** have been performing as a stripped down trio, featuring leader, **Tom Landa, Spirit of the West** stalwart, **Geoffrey Kelly**, and long-serving fiddle ace **Shannon Saunders**. Reports from the front line say they sound great although not quite as loud as before.

Every Tuesday night since 1996, The Irish Heather Bistro in the heart of Vancouver's Gastown district offers a traditional Irish music sessions every Tuesday night. Those taking part include members of **Mad Pudding, Cleia, Fear of Drinking and Dyad**.

★★★

Britain's New Year's Honours list for 2001 saw a handful of people active in the folk arts arena obtain awards. A richly deserved Order of the British Empire went to **Malcolm Taylor**, the English Folk Dance and Song Society's head librarian for services to the Vaughan Williams Memorial Library at Cecil Sharp House in London. **Phil Cunningham** and **Taffy Thomas** received Member of the British Empire awards for their services to Scottish music and children's entertainment respectively.

★★★

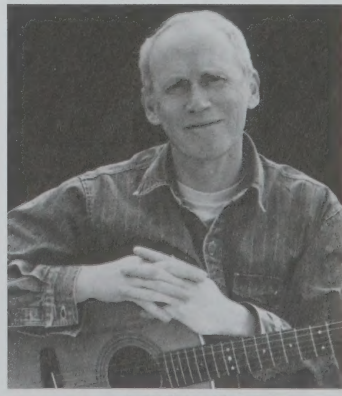
Sheila Chandra is among the artists who have contributed tracks to Village Voice's anthology, *Love Songs for New York*, a fundraiser in the aftermath of September 11. Chandra's contribution is a new piece of work called '11'. The former cellist of the **Kronos Quartet**, **Joan Jeanrenaud** has put together a programme of music using live and pre-



Doug Cox, new Rootsfest Artistic Director



Eileen Lavery, Irish dates with Mary Black



Archie Fisher, Maria Dunn supporter

News

recorded parts for acoustic and electric cello, real-time computer sampling and video installations called *Metamorphosis*; among the works included in the programme is a new take on the Nubian oudist-composer **Hamza El Din's** composition 'Escalay' (*Waterwheel*).

Bapi Das Baul, son of the great Baul musician, **Purna Das Baul**, spent time working on tracks at **Aki Nawaz** of **Fun-da-Mental's** studio in Middlesex at the end of 2001. One hitherto unreleased Bapi Das Baul track, 'Vhabe Pare' (*The Banks of Life*) has already been licensed for the new *Rough Guide to India* CD scheduled for spring release.

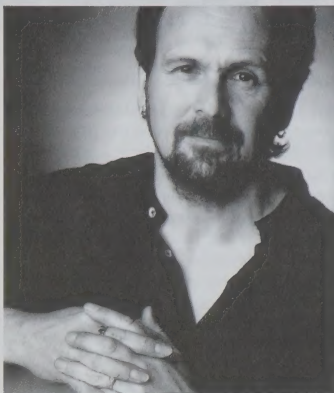
★★★

Free Reed is putting together a five-hour boxed set of **Fairport Convention** material for early summer release. The set follows its **Martin Carthy** set and its three-CD overview of Free Reed's own twenty-five year history, *This Label is not Removable*. The Fairport box draws on the band's extensive back-catalogue, rarities and hitherto unreleased material. Pete Frame, poor bastard, is producing a new family tree to commemorate and resolve what he once called the Fairport Confusion.

★★★

The Toronto Blues Society held its fifth annual awards dinner at the Phoenix Concert Theater, January, 29. Winners were chosen by its members, in conjunction with members of the Montreal, Ottawa, and Thunder Bay Blues Societies, the Coastal Jazz and Blues Society in BC, the CBC Radio show, Saturday Night Blues, and the Harvest Jazz and Blues Festival in New Brunswick.

The winners and categories included: Electric Act of the Year: **Paul Reddick & The Sidemen**; Acoustic Act of the Year: **Michael**



Martin Simpson, Instrumentalist of the Year

Jerome Browne; Male Vocalist of the Year: **John Mays**; Female Vocalist of the Year: **Sue Foley**; New Artist of the Year: **Big Mark and the Blues Express**; International Artist of the Year: **Duke Robillard**; SOCAN Songwriter of the Year: **Paul Reddick**; Recording of the Year: *Rattlebag*, **Paul Reddick & The Sidemen**; Producer of the Year: **Colin Linden**; Entertainer of the Year: **Sue Foley**; Blues Booster of the Year: **Fred Litwin** of **NorthernBlues**; Blues With a Feeling Award: **Jeff Healey**.

★★★

Britain's BBC Radio 2 Folk Awards results for 2002 include: Folk Singer of the Year: **Martin Carthy**; Best Album: **Martin Simpson's**, *The Bramble Briar* (Topic); Best Group: **Cherish The Ladies**; Best Live Act: **Rory McLeod**; Instrumentalist of the Year: **Martin Simpson**; Horizon Award: **Cara Dillon**; Best Traditional Track: **Cara Dillon's**, *Black is the Colour*; Best Original Song: **Kate Rusby's**, *Who Will Sing Me Lullabies*; Lifetime Achievement Awards: **The Chieftains & Fairport Convention**; and Lifetime Achievement Award for Songwriting: **Ralph McTell**.

★★★

BBC Radio 3 World Music Awards winners included: Africa, **Djelimady Tounkara**; Asia / Pacific, **Yat-Kha**; Americas, **Orlando Cachaito Lopez**; Europe / Middle East, **Taraf de Haïdouks**; Boundary Crossing, **Nitin Sawhney**; Innovator, **Manu Chao**; Newcomer, **Susheela Raman**.

★★★

The Top 10 albums of 2001 according to the U.K.'s *fRoots* magazine includes: 1. **Baaba Maal**, *Missing You* (Palm Pictures); 2. **Orlando Cachaito Lopez**, *Cachaito* (World Circuit); 3. **Susheela Raman**, *Salt Rain* (Narada World);

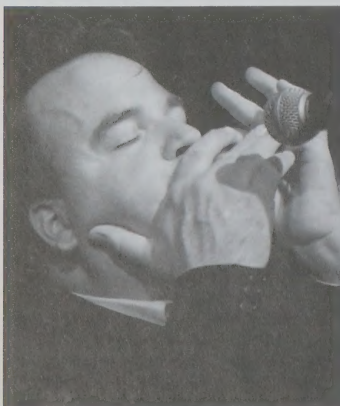
4. **Manu Chao**, *Proxima Estacion Esperanza* (Virgin); 5. **Gillian Welch**, *Time* (*The Revelator*) (Acony); 6. **Djelimady Tounkara**, *Sigui* (Label Bleu/Indigo); 7. **Cara Dillon**, *Cara Dillon* (Rough Trade); **Martin Simpson**: *The Bramble Briar* (Topic); 9. **Kékélé**: *Rumba Congo* (Sterns); **Nitin Sawhney**, *Prophesy* (V2).

★★★

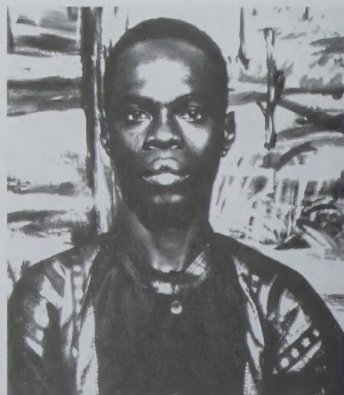
Ontario's **Paul Reddick & The Sidemen's** third disc *Rattlebag* (named after a collection of poetry edited by **Ted Hughes**) has earned a nomination for Best New Artist Debut of the Year at the W.C. Handy Awards held in Memphis in May. **Joni Mitchell** received a Lifetime Achievement Award at the recent Grammys. And veritable Edmonton-based roots label, **Stony Plain Records**, earned its first ever Grammy nomination, for **Maria Muldaur's** *Richland Woman Blues*. **Stony Plain** owner, **Holger Peterson**, just celebrated 30 years as host of CKUA Radio's Natch'l Blues. It's Canada's longest running blues program.

★★★

Roots music triumphed at the 44th Annual Grammy Awards due mainly to the success of the *O Brother Where Art Thou?* soundtrack. It earned awards for Album of the Year, Country Collaboration with Vocals (**The Soggy Bottom Boys**), Male Country Performance (**Ralph Stanley**), Soundtrack, and for Producer of the Year, Non-classical (**T Bone Burnett**). The *O Brother*... spinoff, *Down From The Mountain*, was the Traditional Folk Album of the Year. Other folk, roots and world music related recipients included: erm... Female Rock Vocal Performance: **Lucinda Williams**, *Get Right With God*; Country Instrumental Performance: **Earl Scruggs** and Co., *Foggy Mountain Breakdown*; Country



Paul Reddick, W.C. Handy Nomination



Baaba Maal, fRoots Album of the Year

News



Eileen McGann, Juno nominee

Performance by a Duo or Group with Vocal: Alison Krauss & Union Station, *The Lucky One*; Country Album: **Various Artists**, *Timeless* – Hank Williams Tribute; Bluegrass Album, Alison Krauss & Union Station, *New Favorite*; Traditional Blues Album: **Jimmie Vaughan**, *Do You Get The Blues?*; Contemporary Blues Album, **Delbert McClinton**, *Nothing Personal*; Contemporary Folk Album: **Bob Dylan**, *Love And Theft*; World Music Album: **Ravi Shankar**, *Full Circle/Carnegie Hall 2000*.

Toronto's ubiquitous **Colin Linden** was involved in five Grammy nominated recordings. Two came up trumps: *Timeless: The Songs Of Hank Williams* and *Down From The Mountain*

★★★

Nominations for the 2002 Juno Awards, set for announcement Sunday, April 14, in St-John's, Newfoundland, include Best Roots & Traditional album (Solo): Maria Dunn, *For A Song* (Distant Whisper Music); **David Francey**, *Far End Of Summer* (Laker Music); **Penny Lang**, *Gather Honey*, (Borealis); **Eileen McGann**, *Beyond The Summer*, (Dragonwing); April Verch, *Verchusosity*, (Rounder).

Best Roots & Traditional Album (Group): **The Brothers Cosmoline**, *Songs of Work & Freedom*, (Bobby Dazzler); **La Bottine Souriante**, *Cordial* (Mille-Pattes); **Matapat. Petit Fou** (Borealis); **Undertakin' Daddies**, *Post Atomic Hillbilly* (Caribou); **The Wyrd Sisters**, *Sin & Other Salvations*, (Wyrd Records).

Best Blues Album: **Mel Brown & Snooky Pryor**, *Double Shot!* (Electro-fi); **Michael Jerome Browne**, *Drive On*, (Borealis); Rita Chiarelli, *Breakfast at Midnight*, (NorthernBlues); Colin Linden, *Big Mouth* (Columbia); Paul Reddick & The

Sidemen, *Rattlebag*, (NorthernBlues).

Best Global Album: **Kiran Ahluwalia**, *Kashish Attraction* (Kiran Music); **Jane Bunnett**, *Alma de Santiago*, (EMI); **Hilario Duran**, *Havana Remembered*, (Avalon); **Alpha Yaya Diallo**, *The Journey* (Jericho Beach); **Mei Han & Randy Raine-Reusch**, *Distant Wind* (Za).

Best Aboriginal Album: **Eagle & Hawk**, *On and On* (Sunshine); **Marcel Gagnon**, *Crazy Maker* (Iindie Pool); **Strength & Hope**, *My Ojibway Experience*, (Billy Joe Green); **Nakoda Lodge**, *Dark Realm* (Sunshine).

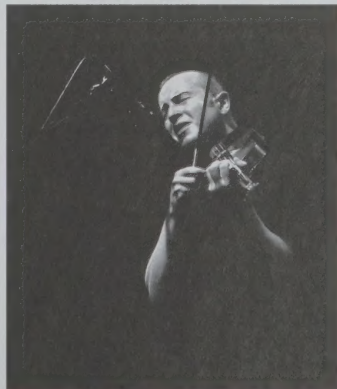
★★★

Jörg Gebauer of Germany's Fischerhude-based WeltWunder label is compiling an anthology of German folk music following on WeltWunder's truly excellent Italian and Polish audio-travelogues. Germany has one of the most happening folk scenes in Europe right now and Gebauer's provisional selections, licensing permitting, for *Travellin' Companion 3: A Musical Journey to Germany* look bloody good.

★★★

Kate Rusby and **John McCusker** have contributed music to the motion picture *Heartlands* from the director **Damion O'Donnell** (East Is East) and also make a cameo appearance as seaside pub musicians in one pub scene. The film uses material from Rusby's *Sleepless* and new material in its soundtrack.

Rusby is also one of the accompanying musicians who have put down contributions to **Linda Thompson's** next album set for release on Rounder and Topic in the States and Great Britain respectively. Other collaborators include **Eliza Carthy**, **Martin Carthy**, **Teddy Thompson**, **Martha** and **Rufus Wainwright**. **Ed Haber** was completing work on mixing the



John McCusker—worked on movie soundtrack



Photo: Wayne Stiles

Bill Monroe, honoured

album around the end of January, with an album release timetabled for early summer. Rufus Wainwright is among an assortment of musicians such as **Brian Ferry**, **Annie Lennox**, and **Ladysmith Black Mambazo** and an actorly cast of dozens ranging from **Richard Attenborough**, **Kenneth Branagh**, **Joseph Fiennes**, **Diana Rigg** and **Susannah York** contributing to *When Love Speaks*, an anthology of Shakespearean sonnets, for EMI Classics. **Linda Thompson** and **John Tams** both appeared in the play *The Good Hope* in the Cottesloe Theatre (the smallest of the National Theatre's London stages) around the turning of the year. Tams in the meanwhile has been laying down tracks and writing new material for his follow-up to *Unity*. **Oliver Knight** has completed his solo debut after two album collaborations with his mother, **Lal Waterson**, likewise for Topic.

★★★

Hazel Dickens, **Bill Monroe** and **Harold Levanthal** were honored with Lifetime Achievement Awards at the 14th Annual North American Folk Alliance Conference held recently in Jacksonville, Florida. Past recipients include **Paul Robeson**, **The Carter Family**, **Woody Guthrie**, **Leadbelly** and **Pete Seeger**. The Conference moves to Nashville, TN, Feb., 6 - 9 in 2003, San Diego, CA, in 2004, and Montreal, QC, in 2005.

The Ontario Council of Folk Festivals holds its annual conference in Ottawa, October, 18 - 20, 2002. For further information call Ph 1-866-292-OCFF (6233).

The World Music Expo, WOMEX, moves from Berlin to Essen, Germany, in 2002 and runs October 24 - 27. WOMEX is exclusively dedicated to world, roots, folk, ethnic, traditional and local music of all kinds.

★★★

News

Deaths

Wade Hemsworth, the dean of Canadian folk song writers, died January 19 at the age of 85, writes **Dean Verger**. Among his songs were such classics as *The Log Driver's Waltz*, *The Black Fly Song*, *Foolish You*, and *Wild Goose*. Born and raised in Brantford, Ontario, Wade took up the tenor banjo and four-stringed guitar. He attended the Ontario College of Art and from 1940-45 was in the RAF. It was during this wartime period while posted to Newfoundland that he became interested in traditional folk styles. After the war he left a job in an ad agency to join a survey crew, where he gained first-hand knowledge for songs such as *Wild Goose* and *The Blackfly Song*.

In 1955 Wade recorded *Folk Songs of the Canadian Northwoods* for Folkways Records singing two original and 10 traditional songs. By the 1960s he was known in the Montreal coffee house circuit, and by the likes of **Pete Seeger**, who included *The Blackfly Song* in two of his books ('61 and '64).

Wade's day jobs took advantage of his art background, and may have influenced his marrying **Irene Heywood**, artist and art critic for the *Gazette* in Montreal.

Kate and Anna McGarrigle having heard of Wade Hemsworth set out to see him live in a Montreal coffee house which fostered a lifelong friendship. They made a point of including *Foolish You* on their debut album.

Wade Hemsworth is probably best known in Canada because of the NFB's two film shorts, *The Log Driver's Waltz* (1979), and *The Blackfly* (1987) with the McGarrigles. Other musicians who have recorded his songs include, **The Travellers**, **Jackie Washington**, and **String Band**, to name just a few. In 1990 at the age of 72 he finally recorded a CD of 15

songs. A songwriter's songwriter Wade Hemsworth's writings, though not prolific, are beautiful.

★★★

Dave van Ronk kicked off his mortal coil on 10 February. Born 30 June 1936, the man was a gem, writes **Ken Hunt**, one of those chaps that make you proud to love folk music and what makes folk music great. He was a true inspiration to many, and the obituaries will gush with torrents of name checking of a vulgar, ear-catching nature. More importantly, he heard and really listened and that was what made his music special when it came out through him.

He played around with all manner of musical genres, sipping from ragtime, tasting Afro-American and Anglo-American genres, messing with Anglo folksong and taking the politics of left-wing chanson onto an American stage when there was an air of cautiousness to sticking your head out when the nastiness of McCarthyism and McCarranism might stir and be reborn.

He was never precious about what he did. That was the key to his success. He loved it for what it was and he made of it what he could. He shaped it to his political worldview. Bungles or better, he made of it what he could and from Carnegie Hall to tiny clubs what he made of it was inspirational. Purists could take the hindmost. Try his 1989 joint album with **Frankie Armstrong**, *Let No One Deceive You—Songs of Bertolt Brecht*, for a taste of the hard stuff.

★★★

Scottish folk singer and guitarist **Tony Cuffe** died December 18, in Arlington, MA. He was 47. Cuffe possessed one of the most distinctive voices of the Scottish folk revival. And his guitar playing helped pioneer the transposition of Scots' fiddle and pipe music to the guitar. The likes of **Tony McManus** now cite him as a direct influence.

Born in Greenock, Cuffe studied English at Glasgow University and planned a career in teaching before being seduced by the music of Archie Fisher, **Martin Carthy**, **The Bothy Band** and, especially, **Planxty**. Cuffe started out in Alba, joined **Jock Tamson's Bairsns** and then the highly acclaimed **Ossian**.

Besides his distinctive, syncopated guitar style, he also played whistle, the small Latin American tiple, and a clarsach, which he made himself. Aside from his band recordings, he also contributed to the notable *Fergusson's Auld Reekie* album of poetry and song, Linn Records series of songs by Robert Burns and made the fine solo LP, *When First I Went to Caledonia*.

In 1988, Cuffe moved his family to Arlington, outside Boston, where he performed

with local Celtic bands and taught widely. He played for **Bill Clinton** at the White House on St. Patrick's Day. Early in 2001, though, Tony Cuffe was diagnosed with cancer. He died at home, surrounded by his wife, Cath, and their three children, Lindsey, Christopher and Adrian.

★★★

The Canadian folk music scene lost one of its own, writes James Gordon, with the death last month of CBC broadcasting icon **Peter Gzowski**. For a generation he had the uncanny ability to make us feel as though our huge diverse nation was an intimate, accessible community. Because of him we understood our country a little bit better. Our best writers and performers in the folk genre shared that ability with Gzowski, and he seemed to recognize that kinship early on his long career. First with *This Country In the Morning* and later with *Morningside*, his music programming always featured Canadian folk music in a major way.

For many years his radio show was the only national daily radio broadcasting outlet for folk recordings, and the profile gained by the many artists that he championed was invaluable to them. Not only did his show feature new releases by folk artists, his frequent in-depth interviews with them gave Canadians a seldom-seen glimpse into their personalities, an attention usually only paid to more mainstream pop performers.

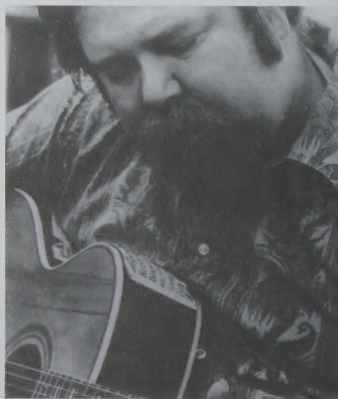
Getting a Gzowski interview was considered by many to be the official "arrival" of a folk musician, and those of us who he helped "arrive" will be forever grateful. A true Canadian hero in a country that seldom recognizes them, he deserves a song of his own!

★★★

Newfoundland accordionist **Minnie White** died December 16. She was 85. Born



Tony Cuffe



Dave Van Ronk

News

Mary Agnes Hoskins in St. Albans, on the island's south coast in 1916, she taught herself to play the two-row accordion, mandolin, fiddle and piano. She received the Order of Canada in 1993. Hoskins married **Richard White** in 1937 and settled in the Codroy Valley to raise six children. Family duties took priority over music but in the 1960s, with her children grown up, she began to play local venues on a part-time basis, and released and financed her first LP, *Newfoundland's First Lady of the Accordion*, in 1973. While she wrote her own tunes, her repertoire also consisted of the island's traditional Scottish, Irish, English and French instrumentals. Her last recording, *The Hills of Home*, earned an East Coast Music Award nomination in 1994.

★★★

John Jackson, the man who put Rappahannock County, Virginia on the international map, died on 20 January in Fairfax, Virginia. **Elijah Ward** wrote a benchmark piece on him published in *Sing Out!* in 1994. At that stage, he was 70 years old. It captured something of the man's struggle. Never a bluesman in any strict sense, he learned from and adapted commercial recordings. He never fought shy of copying, be it **Josh White** or **The Carter Family**, but he adapted and composed to create a respectable body of work under his own name. His folk blues did a wonderful job of crisscrossing and interlacing musical genres. A body of work on Arhoolie, Alligator and Rounder illustrates his musical abilities.

Tour Guide

Ian Tamblyn & Rodney Brown: Mar. 9, National Arts Centre, , ON; Mar. 12, McMichael Gallery, Kleinburg, ON; Mar. 13, Hugh's Room, Toronto, ON; Mar. 14, Chaucer's Pub, 122 Carling Street, Londo, ON; Mar. 16, Regent Theatre, Picton, ON; Mar. 18 - 19, Classic, Cobalt, ON; Mar. 20, Capitol Centre Galaxy, North , ON; Mar. 21, South River Community Centre, South River, ON; Mar. 22, House Concert with Barrie Folk Society, Barrie, ON; Mar. 23, Art Gallery of Algoma, Sault Ste. Marie, ON; Mar. 24, Blind River Community Centre, Blind River, ON; Mar. 26., Michipocoten High, Wawa, ON; Mar. 27, The Manitouwadge Folk Cafe, - Manitouwadge, ON; Mar., 28, Intergenerational Centre for Arts and Alternatives, Atikokan, ON; Mar., 30, Unitarian Hal, Thunder Bay, ON; April 1, Sled Dog Music, Winnipeg, MB; April 3, Cochenour Community Hall, Red Lake, MB; April 4th Nip-Rock High School Auditorium, Red Rock, ON; April 5, Marathon High School, Marathon, ON; April 6., Sudbury Regional Arts Council & Scott Merrifield, Sudbury, ON; April 28, The Weave Shed,

Cornwall, ON.

★★★

James Keelaghan: ON; April 17, West End Cultural Centre, 204-780-3333, Winnipeg, MB; April 18, The Exchange, Regina, SK; April 20, Knox United Church, 403-233-0904, Calgary, AB; April 21, Festival Place Theatre, 780-449-3378, Sherwood Park, AB; April 24, Harrison Memorial Hall, 604-796-3664, Harrison Hot Springs, BC; April 26, Sid Williams Theatre, Courtenay, BC; April 27, Della Herman Theatre, Smithers, BC.

★★★

Stephen Fearing: Mar. 12, Cactus Jacks, 250-377-8411, Kamloops, BC; Mar. 13, St. John Anglican Church Hall, 250-992-6152, Quesnel, BC Mar. 15, Rogue Folk Club, 604-736-3022, W.I.S.E. Hall, Vancouver, BC; Mar. 16, The Lucky Bar, 250-382-8422, Victoria, BC; Mar. 18, Sidetrack Cafe, 780-424-5181, Edmonton, AB; Mar. 19, Engineered Air Theatre, 403-294-7472, Calgary, AB; Mar. 20, West End Cultural Centre, 204-783-6918, Winnipeg, MB; Mar. 22, The Guelph Youth Music Centre, 519-837-1119, Guelph, ON; Mar. 23, Hugh's Room, 416-530-6604, ON; Mar. 24, The Orillia Opera House, 705-689-9328, Orillia, ON

★★★

Oh Susanna: Mar. 10, The Grandstand Medicine Hat Exhibition. (w/ **Jim Bryson**), Medicine Hat, AB; Mar. 11, Art Station (w/ Jim Bryson), Fernie, BC; Mar. 13, Railway Club (w/ Jim Bryson), Vancouver, BC; Mar. 14, The Salmar Theatre (w/ Jim Bryson), Salmon Arm, BC; Mar. 15, Mt Royal College (w/ Jim Bryson), Calgary, AB; Mar. 16, Sidetrack Café (w/ Jim Bryson), Edmonton, AB; Mar. 17, Amigo's (w/ Jim Bryson), Saskatoon, SK; Mar. 21, Scherzo Pub, Kingston, ON; Mar. 22, Sheep Inn, Wakefield, ON;



Oh Susanna, date in Salmon Arm

Editorial

I cannot tell you how happy I was to see David Francey win Penguin Eggs' Critics Poll. And Maria Dunn squeezed between such giants as Gillian Welch and Lúnasa, in third place. Brilliant. Hats off also to Harry Manx, who triumphed over Francey and The Waifs in a real . . . erm . . . dog-fight to earn the Critics Favourite New Discovery of 2001 – no mean feat considering the scope and depth of the opposition.

Both Francey and Dunn record on their own small budget independent labels and Manx released his debut with exciting, fledgling NorthernBlues. All three performers are relatively new to national audiences so our broad-based panel of experts obviously did their homework and talent triumphed as it should. And just to confirm coast to coast fingers on pulses, both Francey and Dunn recently received Juno nominations for their discs. So a sincere congratulations and thanks to all who contributed.

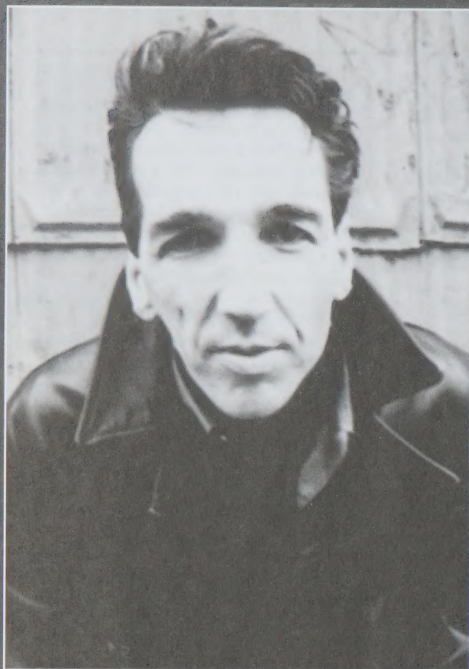
From the lists supplied, and there were many more requisitioned than appear in print, the individual choices make fascinating reading. Quite clearly North American roots still dominate Canadian tastes. World music, it seems, still has to catch on here the way it has in Europe, despite a bumper crop of brilliant releases in 2001 from such veterans as Baaba Maal and newcomers like Gigi.

Their lack of recognition concerns me because of a bigger issue at stake, if a recent conversation with Doug Cox – artistic director of BC's Rootsfest and Musicwest – is anything to go by. These festivals deliberately avoided the name folk. Yet, both book folk musicians and singers extensively. The 'f' word on the West Coast, says Cox, still conjures up negative views – remnants of the 1960s – among potential audiences and sponsors. And if that seems extreme consider the fact that the wonderful U.K. magazine Folk Roots changed its name a few years ago to fRoots, for similar reasons. Tracy Grammer and Dave Carter say the same thing in this issue. It boggles the mind how these clichés remain so entrenched for 35-odd years.

World music provides a significant spark to the ongoing roots revival. Well just think about it: who could possibly equate Mercedes Sosa or Fun-da-Mental with Donovan or Jessie Colin Young? Diverse talents offer a door past derisory perceptions. Which brings me back to the whole purpose of the Critics Poll: to expose our readers to as wide a variety of quality music as possible. For a first effort, I think we did alright. Let's just see how we fare a year from now.

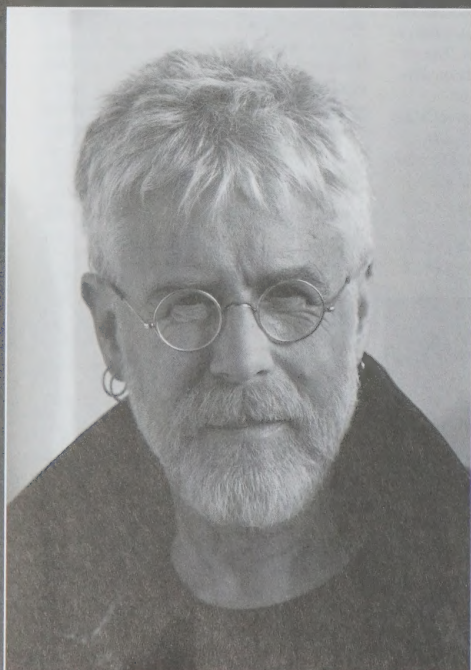
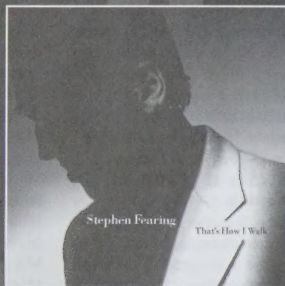
– Roddy Campbell

New from True North Records



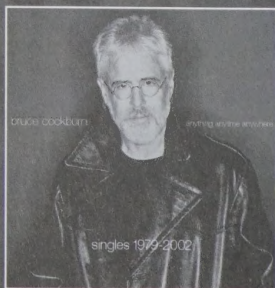
stephen fearing that's how i walk

musically rich, and lyrically powerful 'That's How I Walk' is a defining work in the career of one of Canada's most respected songwriters and guitarists



bruce cockburn anything anytime anywhere singles 1979-2002

"spiritual longing, romantic angst, social commentary and killer guitar playing make this a bona fide auditory treat for the curiosity seeker as well as the die-hard fan." - Performing Songwriter



Tubthumping



Wyckham Porteous

Sex 'n' Suds 'n' Growin' Old

Wyckham Porteous on middle-aged strippers, transvestite poets and the odd creepy city. Roddy Campbell keeps an ear to the ground and his hands in his pockets.

A live sex show in Amsterdam inspired Wyckham Porteous's latest recording, *sexand-drinking*. Not, of course, to diminish the role of a rousing brawl witnessed at a poetry reading in a London pub.

Porteous describes his latest release as a travelogue of sexual adventure. It started in the red-light district of Amsterdam, wove its way through the voodoo-laced streets of New Orleans, and wound up in the blue-collar strip bars that stretch between Guelph and Woodstock.

"The whole genesis of the record came from a trip I took to Amsterdam. I wandered around and went to the various cafes, into the sex museums and different places, and it just struck me how North America, if it's not prudish, it's extremely conservative in its attitude to this kind of thing. And if it's not, then it sees it as sleazy and not particularly edifying," says Porteous.

"I went to one of those live sex shows. It

was \$75 a ticket and basically no more than a glorified strip show. But because it was expensive, it was very upper middle class. There was a lot of couples there and I just noticed when something is presented in a certain manner that people accept it differently.

"So it was more just thoughts on that and the music industry. When we were younger the bands and the writers were always drinking, smoking and doing everything against the norm and now that attitude has been kind of quelled. . . It's not that I'm advocating going off and drinking and doing all those things it's more about the attitude."

Produced by Morris Tepper, whose credits include Tom Waits, P.J. Harvey and Captain Beefheart, *sexanddrinking* is a bold, intelligent, intense and sometimes humorous recording that prods the boundaries of social mores in a manner befitting beat luminaries Jack Kerouac and Alan Ginsberg — sources Porteous tips his hat to on the gloriously, blistering, roots rock of *Mighty Drinkers* with its shades of Oysterband.

"I've never heard them," says he, amidst the clattering of pans and barking of dogs in his East Vancouver kitchen.

The sprawling, funk driven, title track with its Frank Zappa & The Mothers of

Invention-ish humorous spoken delivery opens this disc. No doubt heads will be scratched, over his half-mocking English accent and falsetto delivery. It certainly won't appeal to everyone and yet it's intensity is impossible to ignore. Porteous credits Tepper, whom he met at the Winnipeg folk festival in 1992, for stretching his musical tastes.

"He opened me up to possibilities. I didn't have to stay within a certain slot. Most of the records I've made have been a little bit different from the one before. I've never really been a conscious folk singer or a rock singer so I said, 'I'll just do what I really want to do.' I've done a lot of theater, and a lot of writing beyond songs, so I thought I'll just try and do something different."

All fine and dandy, of course, but there's also another great story behind that song.

"I was invited to this poetry reading in an Irish pub in Brixton (London). I was supposed to read. There was a transvestite up there who was a really good sort of ranting poet. Then this guy from Oxford started yelling and harassing this person. So he said, 'Oh, shut up and go read your own poetry if you're so freaking good.' So the guy said, 'Okay, I will.' And he was unreal, just off the top of his head.

"They started arguing back and forth and pretty soon there was a brawl. And all these poets were duking it out. And I thought, 'That's exciting. At least there's a little bit of life in the old genre.' That's one thing about here: you don't get a brawl breaking out in a poetry hearing. In our circles, you don't get a brawl anywhere."

While largely a barnstorming venture, *sexanddrinking* has also its moments of exquisite plaintiveness. *Amsterdam, Fall So Deep* and *Ophelia* being the principal cases in point. The gorgeous latter came out of the strip bars in southern Ontario.

"I was in Stratford. A friend had met me when I was playing there. His big thing, he goes around to strip bars. It's honestly something I hadn't done in years and years and years. So we went of for a couple of days with this guy all over Guelph, and London, and Woodstock, and different places. And in one of them, this woman, Dolly, was dancing and she was just phenomenal. She was an older woman for that genre, in her mid-30s. She was captivating. She came down and talked to us. She was just this lovely person. And so really it was from meeting her I started to write this song. There's sort of a winsome quality with

Tubthumping

the over-riding male thoughts of what-ifs in your life — you know, that kind of thing.”

And then there's *Louisiana*: his first stab at writing a blues tune: “New Orleans is a particular creepy city. And I wrote that while I was there. It was the only city I've been to where I felt totally foreign even though it was an English speaking place primarily. It's always got the highest murder rate; it's always scary. You're always on edge. It's a strange place the vegetation and the animal life and everything. And I had never written a blues song and I thought, ‘Well, it's a tough genre to tackle because, let's face it, every blues song has been written pretty well.’ And so it's very difficult to tackle, and to actually put it on a record and go, ‘Well, here's my little blues song. Hopefully, it's not too much of a cliché.’”

Despite the frequently quoted misconception, Wyckham Porteous lives in Vancouver not Victoria, BC. He was born there, though, but moved to White Rock, then Nanaimo, before settling in Vancouver 18 years ago. The succeeding years produced a remarkable body of work including music for the Leaky Heaven Circus, plays for radio, as well as five lauded albums. And yet, he has never fully achieved the recognition his talents truly warrant. Refusing to tour probably never helped matters much. Indeed, until recently he had not played a live gig in almost two years.

“I don't have an agent. I don't have a manager. It became difficult. I would wait around for someone to phone me. It became long waits. So I kind of woke up in April or March last year and went, ‘Jeez, I haven't actually played for a year, anywhere. And I really wanted to. And it was too late to get festivals. So I didn't play all summer. Then I thought maybe I'm not going to play anymore

and fell into a bit of a funk which I didn't realize I was in.”

It took friends like Joe Hall to pull him out of it. But since then, Porteous has remained incredibly active. Bill Bourne has recruited him to mix his new solo disc. And Besides completing *sexanddrinking*, he has also finished writing enough material for a new album.

“In the next couple of weeks I'm going into the studio to record. There are people who point out to me now when they hear me with a band, ‘Gee, we really would like to hear you play the guitar and sing once.’ So I've a bunch of new songs, more reflective since September 11. I'm just going to do it with a stand-up bass and myself and John playing banjo, make it a real acoustic record.”

From A Distance

Precious and sad, Lynn Miles studied opera, taught a young Alanis Morissette how to sing, and now gets compared to Richard Buckner. Fish Grikowsky wants to kiss her.

Canada is overflowing with secret treasures. There's the shady clearing in Stanley's Park's Lost Lagoon, where new chickadees will land right on your hand and look you in your eye, their wings sounding like tiny motorbikes as they shoot off into the trees. Then there's the abandoned loading bays along Queen Street in Toronto where the partying bums light fires at night and call out from the tips of their wine bottles in gruff voices. And, buddy, don't forget about that store in Coombs with a damn goat living on the roof, the gateway to a hundred hidden bars in the island woods where one day, after I get a real job, I swear I'm going to retire.

These pockets of activity and life are all precious and sad in their fleeting way, and Lynn Miles can be counted among them. She's a secret constellation, weepy and bright. In her own words, “Sad songs are the best songs.” Personal songs seem to be up there, too.

“Never knew the world was such a lonely place . . . never thought I'd ache so much just to see your face . . . never knew the sun would burn so mean and cold . . . never knew that I was gonna feel so old . . . now I understand,” Miles sighs in one song. Then, later on, after all kinds of kinds of pretty laundry is put out (on her newest album, *Unravel*), underwear and all, she sings about a former lover in the defiant *I'm Over You*. “There's your house, there's your car. One, two, three, there you are. Seems to me you got taller; you're in the rear-view mirror now, you're getting smaller.”

Just “happening” to drive by an ex-lover's. Right. Well, we've all been there, of course, nothing to brag about. Miles isn't bragging, though. She's singing a sad song, and there are certain rules to that kind of thing. For example, you have to impart wisdom that would seem obvious, if everyone's lives weren't so full of dumb mistakes. I mean, do you really honestly think you'll never be heart-broken again?

Miles, from Ottawa, dropped out of Carleton, which she regrets a little. In the late '90s, after Billboard had patted her on the back for her *Slightly Haunted* album, she moved down to L.A. for a bit, then back, and now she gets compared to Carole King a lot. She reminds me more of a seriously down-to-Earth Emmylou Harris with shades of Jane Siberry's now-and-then flirtation with simple, weepy tunes. But once you listen to Miles' mind mumble, there's no straying from the fact that, hello, it's Lynn Miles here, and how are you? Though not quite as poetry-driven, she's like Richard Buckner for women, full of history and hurt.

Let's talk about that history, though. Notably, she taught Alanis Morissette to sing early on, so maybe we should just get rid of that right off the bat, eh?

“She was 13 and I was her vocal instructor for a bit,” Miles admits patiently. “I occasionally will take a student,” the dark-haired musician says over the phone from Ontario. You can decide whether or not being taught by such an emotional teacher might have an effect on a young pupil. Both Miles and Morissette breathily sing about barely getting over boys, for example. Then again, so does my mom.

But Miles is one of the few coffeehouse singers to have ever studied opera. Suffice it to say her voice is very pretty and makes you want to kiss her, or at least ask her what's wrong. Keeping a voice beautiful is hard work,



Lynn Miles

Tubthumping



Dave Carter & Tracy Grammer

you know. That's something you learn in opera and remember for good, especially if you spend a lot of time in cars thinking about it, b-lining down the highway all alone. "The first thing you're supposed to do is get lots of sleep. Singers are supposed to get more sleep than most people," says the 43-year-old, who looks about 25, by the way.

Still, Miles hasn't been playing by the rules. She estimates she plays about fifteen states a year, plus Canada, which takes months and months, so much time alone. "It is a lonely haul. In fact, I've just decided I can't do it any more. When you're driving, it's good to be with somebody who appreciates the tree if you appreciate the tree, you know what I mean?"

Especially when the tree's on fire. Because Miles is sensitive, everything since You-Know-What in September has been driving her a bit crazy.

"My head is a very noisy place lately, you sure you want to get into this? I've been thinking about the kind of thin model we've set up in the world; how we need to change the model; how the things we do reflect out into the world. Everyone is watching us. It's so simple, we could have such a beautiful planet with so little sacrifice."

Miles is cynical about the new tragedy of striking back with so much force, and wishes we would've at least dropped the materialism a bit ... SOMETHING. "It's huge and I thought it would have changed us, and I think it did for a couple weeks. I don't know why, but I thought the world would be different.

"Even if things get worse, it's obvious, we'll start to get used to it. We'll still live in an economy that suffers if we don't buy enough. We're living in a little birdcage with no idea that 90% of the world is suffering. I'm thinking of going to Cambodia and reporting back. I want to write a song, but I'm waiting

for the perfect metaphor. Political songs are tough."

Aye, but they're some of the best kinds of sad songs. And we need sad songs, right? Which means we need people, hidden away like treasures, to write them. "I don't think it's a bad thing to do," Miles agrees. "Sad is more in the shadow."

Jung at Heart

Amateur ornithologist Tracy Grammer and her poet partner Dave Carter offer a few pointers on shamanism, Daoism, Buddhism, paganism, mystical Christianity, oh yeah, and postmodern, mythic American music. Richard Thornley takes note.

Not always a pretty thing, Alberta winters. Still, despite an eight-hour trek from Lethbridge to Edmonton on the coldest day in January, Dave Carter and Tracy Grammer are smiling, optimistic, and willing to set aside time to talk. Between sets at the Bonnie Doon Community Hall, they sit on rickety chairs and guitar cases, gracious, thoughtful, and humble. And they talk about the music they call, "post-modern, mythic American music." This description aptly shows up in the majority of their reviews and interviews.

Dave: "We were going to call it 'post-modern, mythic, folk music', and our manager, still a good friend, didn't want us to call it 'folk music' because she manages all these alternative bands. She was afraid if we said we were folk singers nobody would come out to hear us. But we still consider ourselves folk artists."

Clearly, their music strikes a chord and not just with Americans, since *Tanglewood Tree*, their second disc, was the most played album in 2000 by the international community of DJs reporting to the FOLKDJ-L listserve.

Their third album, *drum hat buddha*,

fared similarly well in 2001 (#3) and *Gentle Arms of Eden*, from that album, was the second most played folk song in the same year. Quite amazing, when you consider that they've really only been together since 1998. That year they released their first album but didn't tour until 1999.

Tracy: "We just got the big booking agent, you know, in 2001 and so now things are really starting to roll for us, and we're very much on the upward arc."

So what is the appeal in their music?

Dave: "My two favourite songwriters in the world are Joni Mitchell and Leonard Cohen." Even on first listen, poetry is one of the strongest elements in Tracy Grammer and Dave Carter's songs. While the melodies may immediately catch your attention, the dense word pictures that the duo paint often require time for meaning to emerge.

Tracy: "I think that's one of Dave's gifts, actually - putting something that is philosophically or topically dense over music that is really accessible. And so if you can't get the language right off the bat you can at least tap your toes. But then something about the music will draw you back in and every time you listen to it you'll get a little something more."

Dave: "This is a way of bringing poetry back into everyday life, to combine it with music that is very listenable."

While Carter writes the songs, sings, and plays guitar and banjo, Grammer is an equal member in the partnership, singing and playing violin, guitar, and mandolin. Although she self-deprecatingly describes her own songs as mostly "sprouts", Carter adds that from, "Those sprouts, the beginnings of songs... there will be some wonderful recordings."

In addition, Grammer's violin and fiddle arrangements really separate the duo from the singer-songwriter herd. Their instruments give the music an uncommon range and in the space of a few short songs the listener can be transported from Oklahoma to California to New England to some mythic American dream space and back again!

We get into the subject-matter of the songs by asking if they are bird-watchers. Many of their songs, even the band's t-shirt, feature birds of various kinds: crows, ravens, mockingbirds... Well, it turns out that although Grammer is a novice birdwatcher, Carter draws much of the song imagery from dreams and spiritual experience.

"I have images of birds in dreams a lot. I've also done a fair amount of shamanic work and I have some bird power animals that are especially important to me. That's why the birds turn up a lot."

This really only scratches the surface of the religious and spiritual traditions that seem to be integral to so much of what Carter and

Tubthumping

Grammer are all about: shamanism, Daoism, Buddhism, paganism, mystical Christianity. They refer to *Tanglewood Tree* as an almost purely Buddhist CD (if the Buddha had grown up as a country singer in Oklahoma, Texas, and California).

Dave: "I come from a very religious background so there's this presence of the mystical that's always in my life."

However, it seems to be Jung's theory of the collective unconscious that is the unifying element amongst all the traditions, including musical traditions, in which Carter finds meaning and beauty. That pretty heavy foundation is softened by the gentle warmth and humour in much of the duo's music both on record and live. For instance, between songs they tell a lengthy story of searching for the river of love and finding instead the "stagnant pool of love."

Dave Carter says his songs are the soundtrack to his dreams. With Tracy Grammer he's turned those soundtracks into a rather unique fusion of new age ideals and American roots music. It's a powerful combination.

Strictly Mundial 2001 Salvador de Bahia, Brazil.

Tony Montague nipped down to Brazil to take in the latest world music exhibition and showcase. He left less than overwhelmed.

Jet-lagged after a long flight, and nursing a mild hangover from the arrival celebration, I wander into the Pelourinho, the historic heart of Salvador. The port city of nearly three million, founded in 1549, has a long tradition of festivities. Little do I know that December 4 is Santa Barbara's day, and that in the syncretic Afro-Brazilian religion of candomblé she's venerated as one of the most powerful orixás deities.

Outside the church of Nossa Senhora dos Pretos, built by and for slaves, hundreds of people have gathered. Suddenly I'm swept up in a crowd of ecstatic Salvadorans, processing through the narrow streets to cries of "Viva Santa Barbara," followed by women in the traditional white Bahian costume, groups of men bearing catafalques laden with flowers and effigies of saints, a fusillade from marching drummers at the rear, all on their way to celebrate a special mass on the other side of the Pelourinho. 24 hours later I'm still pulling confetti from my hair, my shirt, my bag.

The star of Strictly Mundial 2001, a world music exhibition and showcase, was without any doubt the city of Salvador and its people. For the second edition of the Mundial (the first was in Zaragoza, Spain) its European

organizers decided to move away from the old continent, and to piggyback on an existing event: Salvador's third Mercado Cultural [Cultural market]. The borrowed ride was not without its bumps.

The Mercado's personnel were certainly friendly, helpful, and enthusiastic. But there were readily foreseeable problems in the pairing of artist and venue; the sound at the shows was often poorly mixed and needlessly loud (in certain cases to the point of distortion); the opening speech was an academic yawn and at the final party you could only converse by shouting at close quarters. Somewhere in the organizational mechanism things weren't quite as they should be for a major international gathering. The piggyback riders occasionally found themselves, and their artists and participants, on the floor.

Perhaps the best way to illustrate this is to quote from the glossy programme guide. Here is the second - and mercifully last - sentence of the outline for a workshop entitled Music of Brazil. Hang on to your vernaculars:

"Diverse shows that they consist in the samples to the living creature, will be representative of the trends to be boarded, whose reference could still be found in stands gifts in the Fair."

Forgive me gentle reader, I won't do that again. But there it is, in unadulterated form - plurals, commas, syntax and all. A poetic brick-wall of language, proud and unfearing. 'Want it translated? No fuss no muss'. Certainly not much English. Good connections, loose connections. . . Half the programme was translated. It made for a challenging read at times. Fortunately the live translators for the presentations were fine.

The most prestigious venue was the

Teatro Castro Alves, a spiffy and cavernous concert hall. It was also absurdly precious. The idea of showcases at such conferences, where a number of performances may be happening at once, is that participants can come and go at will. Hopefully they have enough discretion to enter and leave between songs, but they're not locked out when there's lots of room inside, and when artists have come a long way to sing to as many people as possible.

Anyway, I can't report on much-touted São Paulo singer Monica Salmaso, the first act on opening night. But then neither could several big shots from Washington's fund-rich Ford Foundation, and many others who arrived after the doors were shut. Talk about an event shooting itself in the posterior! The next act, Venezuelan veteran Simon Diaz, was pleasant and polished, but would have fared much better in a smaller setting.

The Teatro Castro Alves also banned shorts and sandals. On the third night, in 30 degrees of heat, having come from an outdoor gig with Margareth Menezes I arrived just as the gates were closing for a performance by Waldemar Bastos. Fellow almost-latecomers were treated to the farcical spectacle of the correspondent from Penguin Eggs hurriedly whipping out long pants and shoes to put on, and gaining admission to the sanctuary with seconds to spare. Bastos was worth it. The songwriter and guitarist from Angola and his band turned in a tuneful and powerful set. The crowd spilled into the aisles cheering and dancing, no doubt breaking more rules and regulations.

The two late-night outdoor stages in the Pelourinho were much better venues, and most of my time was spent there. An evening of accordion-led forró - which ended with a set



Photo: Tony Montague

Margareth Menezes

HOT PICKING.

HOT RIZE

SO LONG OF A JOURNEY: Live At The Boulder Theater



(SUP-3943)

Formed in 1978, *HOT RIZE* was, undoubtedly, one of the hottest bluegrass bands in the land throughout the eighties and up into the early nineties, when they disbanded at the apex of their popularity. Their progressive take on their original and newgrass tunes, as well as their reverential spin on the more traditional material, always left audiences delirious. *SO LONG OF A JOURNEY*, slyly recorded at a homecoming reunion concert in 1996 (March 6 & 7 at the Boulder Theater), captured the band's legendary live magic. These recordings, once lost for several years, are a wonderful tribute to Charles Sawtelle (one-of-a-kind guitarist who succumbed to leukemia in 1999) and one of the greatest bluegrass bands of all time.

"...some of the best music *HOT RIZE* has ever played."
- E-TOWN's Nick Forster, bassist for Hot Rize

TRACK LISTING: Blue Night • Keep Your Lamp Trimmed And Burnin' • Empty Pocket Blues • Radio Boogie • Just Like You • Climbing Up A Mountain • Walkin' The Dog • Frank's Blues • Voice On The Wind • Shadows In My Room • Nellie Kane • The Butcher's Dog • Working On A Building • Walk The Way The Wind Blows • Foggy Mt. Breakdown • High On A Mountain • Colleen Malone • Life's Too Short • Won't You Come And Sing For Me

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from Bahia's excellent, if rather repetitive, Tangino Gondim - drew a particularly large and bubbling crowd.

The Praça Pedro Arcanjo was the scene of a fabulous concert the following night. The thunderous percussion of Maracatus de Pernambuco, from Recife and Olinda, laid down a rhythmic bedrock for rabeca player Mestre Salustiano. The veteran fiddler treated us to a mix of forro, coco de roda, frevo, maracatu and more, while colourful and Carnavalesque dancers provided eye-candy. And Mestre Salustiano was followed by Dona Ivone Lara, one of the great names of samba. She's been on the stage for more than 60 years but is still in fine voice.

For pulse-racing excitement, two artists stood out. Margaret Menezes' concert show, on a quayside next to Salvador's Museum of Modern Art, wasn't officially part of the Mercado, but I was given an invitation at one of the Booths for Expositors (sic).

Backed by a five-piece electric band, the Bahian singer and guitarist tore through songs from her new album with a fierce energy; few artists on the world music circuit can match her stage presence.

Best of all was piano master Omar Sosa who played at an outdoor patio. Blending elements of hard-bop and funk, free jazz and Latin jazz, the genial Sosa and his accomplices unleashed a maelstrom of sounds. A number of times they wound up the music to fever pitch, with Sosa banging out chords as if his piano was a drum - only to stop suddenly, and shift to passages of great lyrical sweetness.

He's an awesome performer, and sadly was the only Cuban at Strictly Mundial. The next edition is in Marseille, February 26 - March 1 2003, where the emphasis is on North African music, and the translations better no doubt will be.

The Pilgrim's Progress

Ian Tamblyn dives in Antarctica and tramps around the High Arctic. He also writes folk songs - some of this country's finest. There are many stones in his passageway, he tells Tom Coxworth.

It's about the journey, for Ian Tamblyn. For over 30 years, his has been a stubborn pursuit to serve the muse. The journey's are not only of land and sea, but also the inner journey of spirit. He considers himself mainly a songwriter, but along the path he also became an adventurer, playwright, music producer and creator of countless soundtracks for film and theater. The only artistic discipline that seems to have escaped him is that of painter. Although, like a painter, he says he draws on visual aspects to create his music.

Tamblyn is on the phone from his home

in Old Chelsea, Quebec, that he shares with his partner Amanda Shaughnessy and sons, Matthew and Walker.

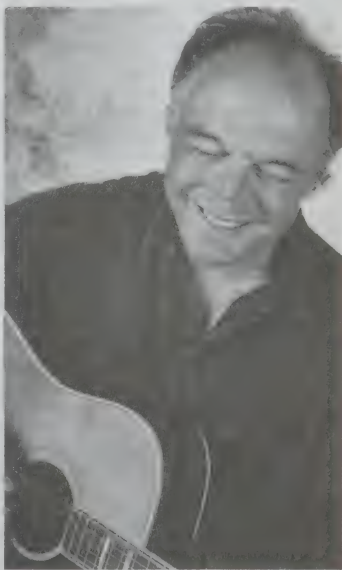
It is difficult to understand how he can maintain such a diverse career and manage so many disciplines. But his numerous awards show that he does it all marvelously.

How do you make it in folk music in Canada? It seems that to endure you must navigate your own course. "You don't have any choice," he confides, "but you have choices within the expression. And if one door seems jammed another door opens. Serendipity plays a large role and I take on all sorts of opportunities." That's how he has kept it going while others with similar dreams have quietly retired.

Tamblyn knew what he was going to do from his earliest days at Trent University and running a folk club. He watched, learned, and shared with the best, and reminisces fondly of performances by Loudon Wainwright, Jerry Jeff Walker and Jesse Winchester.

Today he draws on many of those influences to create his songs. "I'd look to Jesse Winchester for writing a small song, to Randy Newman for something with a searing perspective." But don't exclude Dylan, early Richard Thompson, and Laura Nyro whom he refers to as, "A guiding light as a songwriter."

Our discussion meanders through a career that might have seen him as just a folk troubadour traveling and playing an endless ribbon of clubs. But not all paths lead to their presumed destination. He paraphrases Robert Johnson, "There are many stones in my passageway" as he describes how his creative talents have kept him going. "When one isn't



Ian Tamblyn

Tubthumping



Michael Jerome Browne

working, I switch and work on something else." He is always ready for muse to hit and when it does "I get up and serve it. Sometimes the songs are right there but other times they have to percolate."

Songwriters covering his songs include highly acclaimed Sylvia Tyson, Colleen Peterson and Brent Titcomb. James Keelaghan recently covered Tamblin's classic *Woodsmoke and Oranges* on his latest release, *Home*. He says that it's an "amazing high" to have his songs interpreted by his peers. It encourages him to continue.

His passion for life has made him an enduring figure in Canadian folk music circles. Unlike many of his contemporaries, he has made his mark as a voyageur, discovering and documenting his observations and experiences. For ten seasons his association with Adventure Canada has filled his notebooks with lyrics, ideas and musings from journeys to the High Arctic, Greenland, and even to the underwater world of Antarctica.

Such travels fills his thoughts with fresh images. And he "still maintains a sense of wonder" as he focuses on "people in the landscape and the human drama – the human collisions." These voyages are crusades of discoveries and all go to feed the sometime elusive muse.

"When it's not working, there's no sense going at it like a terrier going at the cuff of the thing. The whole gig is to communicate – share your passion and it's neat when it's received"

Currently, he is excited about his fourth Celtic Odyssey – from Doolin in Country Clare, Ireland, up the west coast and over to the Scottish island of Iona. About the music

around Scotland and Ireland he says, "They know how to swing it and grease it – a direct pipeline from Ireland to Nashville."

Tamblin has recorded 23 albums of well-formed material, and his talent as a producer allows him to step back and as an impartial participant of his own music.

We digress many times in our conversation; there is so much to discuss. His latest recording, though, *Voice in the Wilderness*, is on top of his mind, and as with previous recordings, it is based on voyages drawing on the people and places he visits. "I have a gift to describe it," he says modestly. "It's a continuation of the story."

He does site mortality as one of his challenges: "As one grows older – the great conspiracy of the body to continue and that of the mind – you have to ignore the body then you don't grow old."

Too busy to be a folk icon, he won't be pigeon-holed. It's simply not in his nature. While many write about destinations, Tamblin writes about chasing the sun in his ongoing search for the mystery and magic that ends up in his songs. Ian Tamblin: adventurer, interpreter, troubadour.

Chauffeur so Good

Drive On recently won serious and deserved accolades for Michael Jerome Browne at the recent Maple Blues Awards. Not bad for a ghost, reckons Eric Thom.

There's something haunting about Michael Jerome Browne. You can hear it in his music. You can see it in his eyes. So I accused him of being a ghost from another time. He didn't deny it. He just laughed. For all the

titles he's begun accumulating for the inimicable potpourri of musical styles that drift, spectre-like, off his latest disc, *Drive On*, and his self-titled 1998 debut, he can take considerable satisfaction that, no matter how hard any journalist may try, no label fits.

Try pigeon-holing him into 'the blues' and he'll quickly call himself a 'folk' artist. Call him a folkie and he'll allude to his in-depth roots orientation. No matter how hard you try to pin a name on what he does, Michael will have the last laugh. Such is the cross that someone so uncharacteristically young and so indefinitely original must bear.

Reaction to *Drive On* has been immediate. Originally recognized as the highly-talented electric guitarist who helped bring the Stephen Barry Band to national recognition, Michael's musical beginnings took place in the privacy of his own room at age seven. Here he fashioned himself as a singer, mimicking the pop hits of the day before discovering the harmonica at age nine

"My Dad was just starting to play the instrument. He got me one and I quickly got better than him." His father was key in further musical inspiration. "My father took me to see Sonny Terry and Brownie McGhee, live, and that's what I wanted to do. I was very impressed by that."

Michael graduated to guitar and took to the streets of Montreal to find his audience in the one-man band, 'busking' tradition of his musical heroes: Frank Stokes and Jesse "Lone Cat" Fuller.

"I started on the street at 15 and I saw some older musicians that I knew on St. Catherine's street and I thought, 'Wow, cool! I'd like to do that.' Then I went out and did it and made \$10 for the whole afternoon (laughs) and I was really happy. Later when I was about 20 and moved out, it was how I made my living."

Busking consumed him, as he laid the groundwork for the emotional connection his music demands. "You're your own boss. You go out when you want to and there's something very direct about the interaction between you and the audience. The people who stop are those who are really interested. It's the best audience you can imagine in some ways."

But it was much more than an education and a way to hone his skills. It was his livelihood. "I figured out some tricks...you learn stuff that makes you more money 'til you get to the point where you can make a living. I realized that something visual is important – you won't attract somebody's attention with just the music, so I started playing washboard with my feet and that attracted people...make it a show. It's entertainment."

He had the added benefit of encouragement from his family. "My family has always

Tubthumping

been very supportive. My (parents) were both teachers of literature and I was the third child, the youngest. My older sister was a big leader and I had no pressure to also be one."

Yet *Drive On* reflects an inner drive for perfection. Surely he won this year's Acoustic Act of the Year at February's Maple Blues Awards by being intensely driven.

Michael taught himself to play guitar, mandolin, fiddle and old-time banjo and applied them to his relentless study of musical styles as diverse as old-time country, Cajun, Appalachian, western swing, pre-bebop jazz, R & B, gospel and country blues. Funnel this all through the creative mind of a 41-year old and you end up with an album that includes traditional songs, highly inventive covers and six originals – the result of Michael's collaboration with lyricist partner, B.K. Markus.

As for Michael's eclectic choice of covers, his ability to reinvent the 'songs of today' is second only to his ability to reinterpret the songs of the distant past. Classics from Al Green, Jimi Hendrix, Sam Cooke meld with songs by Irving Berlin, George Jones and Stevie Wonder. And you'd be hard-pressed to differentiate them from the deeply traditional works of Tampa Red, Blind Willie McTell and Jesse Fuller.

Despite his heady accomplishments, Michael remains humble. He'll tell you he's hardly doing anything unique. "I'm just continuing a tradition. If you look at somebody like Leadbelly, he made weird choices. He would sing anything that he liked, whatever pop songs he heard on the radio. He'd do it his way and it would come out really different. Those people didn't worry about what style they were doing or how they were categorized. They were kind of like human jukeboxes."

This sums up where Michael has been and where he intends to go with his music. As much the Lone Cat as his mentor, Fuller, his focus is on his music and the study of styles of the past, with little awareness of his counterparts.

"I'm not that up on who's out there. I just started going to festivals and met a few people that I liked, Alvin Youngblood Hart. I met Eric Bibb out west and really enjoyed him as a performer. He had a good rapport with the audience."

Based on the musical impact of *Drive On*, and Michael's seamless ability to recreate his music live, he can't complain if we describe his talents as being other-worldly. It's as if he's got some mysterious grasp on a timeless tradition of musical expression that is quite possibly beyond his control. He says, himself, "In a way, I think the music chose me".

Listen, and you can't help but agree.



Danú

The Living Tradition

Following in the mighty footsteps of The Bothy Band and De Dannan, Ireland's Danú, approach traditional music with refreshing flair and dignity. Roddy Campbell catches up with the wicked young men from An Rinn.

The legendary Irish piper, Séamus Ennis read Donnchadh Gough bedtime stories. Liam Clancy bought him his first bodhrán. And Gough's first set of practice pipes came from Finbar Furey.

With roots that steeped in traditional music, the odds of the lad becoming the first Irish astronaut were almost as long as a priest's pockets. Of course he would become a musician! With Danú as it turned out, that gloriously refreshing young band from the Gaelic speaking area of Co. Waterford in the south of Ireland.

Named after the ancient Celtic fertility goddess, the seven-piece Danú's indisputable appeal comes from their gorgeous, pristine arrangements and the wonderful, wonderful, understated, singing of Ciarán Ó Gealbháin. There's truly a heart-warming purity – no brash tempos, no electronic sleight-of-hand, no alien beats or rhythms – in their approach to traditional music both on stage and on record.

"I think that's how traditional music should be played," says Gough. "If you listen to the likes of De Dannan, which we would, a lot, I suppose, and Planxty and the Bothy Band, they never seemed to use any tricks. They just played good music, you know. And The Chieftains, of course, like to play like

that. Sure, there's no real tricks involved in recording Irish music is there?"

Not judging by their formidable records, no. *All Things Considered* is there latest, and like its predecessor, *Think Before You Think*, it's a beautiful, uncompromising traditional collection of tunes and songs sung in both English and Gaelic. There's no magic formula, of course, for making recordings such as these.

"Jesus, we're wicked men altogether, like. We've never gigged anything before recording it. We just get a house together for a couple of weeks before hand and go into the house and throw sets of tunes and ideas at each other and come up with material."

Recorded at Liam Clancy's studio in An Rinn, Co. Waterford, *All Things Considered* features the great man himself adding vocals on *Easy And Free* (often known as *Jock Stewart*). Clancy and Tommy Makem, incidentally, spent a number of years in Calgary in the mid-'70s taping their own nationally broadcast television show. Clancy's son Donal, now a member of Solas, was born there.

"Liam, of course, lives in An Rinn, where I'm from," says Gough. "My aunt is actually married to his brother, Bobby. He gave me my first bodhrán. He had myself and Ciarán in his band when he was gigging. He was very supportive."

"We were down in my parents' pub one night and we were having a tune. Ciarán and Liam did that song *Easy And Free*. We said, 'Jesus, that's lovely. We'll have to get it on the album.' So over the next couple of days, we recorded it up in Liam's house. He wouldn't

Tubthumping

even take money for it, 'There you go lads.' He's a good friend."

Gough, Ó Gealbháin, Brendan McCarthy and Donal Clancy all grew up playing and singing traditional music almost from the time they could walk. By their teens it had become an obsession.

"There's a whole scene going back 10 years ago. I'm 26 now. When we were 16, 17, 18 years of age, we were all just mad for traditional music," says Gough. "My parents had a pub, have a pub, in An Rinn. We used to meet there – vodkas and cokes disguised as cokes, bottles of Bunrads disguised as Cidona. And we just played music, played music, played music. Especially in the summers, we'd always head off to festivals and meet other musicians. It was just a way of life."

On their way to France for the Festival Interceltique de Lorient in 1994, they found the brothers Tom and Eamon Doorley at a session in Dublin. They invited them to join them in France the following year. But by then, Clancy was gigging with his father. Various friends had come and gone but those who remained won the prestigious Bolee de Corrigan competition in 1996.

"That was the start of it. We went down really well there. So we got back and said, 'Jesus we should record an album for the crack, you know, which was the first (self-titled) Danú album recorded over a couple of



weekends. We never meant to be a band, it just sort of happened. Tom Sherlock got a copy of the album, anyway, he was working at Claddagh records at the time. He manages Altan now. And he ordered 200 records from us and that was the start of it."

The U.S. label Shanachie subsequently signed them to a three-record deal. Various accolades followed. The prestigious BBC Radio 2 Folk Awards anointed them group of the year in 2001. And their lineup continued to evolve. American fiddler Jessie Smith – his mum played with Cherish The Ladies – left after the last disc. Oisín Macauley took his place. While they are all still mainly in their

mid-20s, Donnchadh Gough reckons they have matured. Well, somewhat.

"When we were younger we were playing as mad as Jaysus, know what I mean, like. Everything was mad – wild, fast music. I think as we get older we're getting a little bit mellower and people are starting to like it. But we were a different kind of an act. We were playing for younger people when we were starting off, playing for a lot of the colleges in Dublin, which would be stand-up gigs. And now it's sitting down for audiences and putting on a show, playing nice songs and tunes, not going too wild, but sometimes you do."

Win Castles of Gold Double CDs

Green Linnet Records have very kindly given us six Castles of Gold double CDs of songs and stories of Irish Immigration. Out of a population of eight million over five million men, women and children left Ireland for America in the wake of The Great Irish Hunger (1845 - 1849). Today, 40 million Americans claim Irish heritage. The stories on Castles of Gold are read by Irish-American Pulitzer-prize-winning author Frank McCourt and Roma Downey.

Pan Morigan does all the singing and is accompanied by the likes of Joannie Madden of Cherish The Ladies and fiddler Liz Carroll. To win one of these wonderful discs all you have to do is answer the three questions listed below and e-mail your answers to penguineggs@hotmail.com. Please do not forget to include your postal address so we can forward your prize. We will not contact anyone who forgets.

- Q1: Who played Frank McCourt's father in the film *Angela's Ashes*?
- Q2: What best-selling memoir did McCourt's brother Malachy write?
- Q3: Who wrote the song *Thousands Are Sailing*?



The answers to our last competition were: Q1: The Albion Band, Q2: Folk Album Of The Year at the Newfoundland and Labrador Music Industry Awards. The winners were: Katrin Sernat, Montreal, QC; Gary Schlee, Toronto, ON; A.M. St-Laurent, Vancouver, BC; Jane Cooper, Calgary, AB; Rene Lassard, Edmonton, AB; Denis Belanger, Val-Beair, QC; Lise Deschamps, Shawinigan-Sud, QC; Claudette Corrigan, Laval, QC; Karen Graunke, Grande Prairie, AB.

The Albums of 2001

And Favourite new Discoveries

Penguin Eggs canvassed numerous national journalists, radio hosts, club and folk festival directors – anyone with an above average exposure or interest in the folk, roots or world music discs released in Canada in 2001. After much prodding and coaxing, thirty-five hearty souls responded.

DAVID FRANCEY



Penguin Eggs Album of the Year
The Far End of Summer, David Francey



Critics Favourite New Discovery of the Year
Harry Manx

Runners up Album of the Year

2. Gillian Welch, *Time (The Revelator)*, Stony Plain
3. Maria Dunn, *For A Song*, Distant Whisper Music,
4. Lúnasa, *Merry Sisters of Fate*, Green Linnet
5. Afro Celt Soundsystem, *Vol III: Further In Time*, Real World; Dave Carter & Tracy Grammer, *drum hat buddha*, Signature Sounds; Bob Dylan, *Love And Theft*, Sony; Gigi, *Gigi*, Palm Pictures; Baaba Maal, *Missing You*, Palm Pictures; Harry Manx, *Dog My Cat*, NorthernBlues; Paul Reddick & The Sidemen, *Rattlebag*, NorthernBlues; Various Artists, *O Brother...*, Mercury.

Runners Up New Discoveries

2. David Francey
2. The Waifs
4. Be Good Tanyas
- Bill Hilly Band
- Dave Carter & Tracy Grammer

For this the first poll, Penguin Eggs canvassed numerous national journalists, radio hosts, club and folk festival directors – anyone

with an above average exposure or interest in folk, roots or world music. The main stipulation was that nobody could vote for a recording or performer they had a professional association with. There were no distinctions made between new discs and re-releases but each recording had to be available in Canada and released in 2001. It also had to fall into the categories we cover in Penguin Eggs. Every nomination, listed alphabetically, received one point. The winners had the most votes. Here is how our panel of experts chose:

Derek Andrews, Music Programmer for Harbourfront Centre, Toronto.

Carlinhos Brown, *Omllette Man* (Virgin); Manu Chao, *Proxima Estacion Esperanza* (Virgin); Alpha Yaya Diallo, *The Journey* (Jericho Beach); Gigi, *Gigi* (Palm); Harry Manx, *Dog My Cat* (NorthernBlues); Matapat, *Petit Fou* (Borealis); Emeline Michel, *Corde et Ame* (Independent); Shushella Raman, *Salt Rain*, (Narada); Paul Reddick and the Sidemen, *Rattlebag* (NorthernBlues); Martina Sorbara, *The Cure For Big Deeds* (Little Big Music). Discoveries: Shushella Raman, Zucco 103, Souad Massi.

Mike Barker: Artistic Director, Folk Under The Clock, Peterborough.

Afro Celt Sound System, *Vol. 3: Further in Time* (Real World); J.P. Cormier, *Now That The Work Is Done* (Tidemark); David Francey, *Far End Of Summer* (Laker Music); Lucy Kaplansky, *Every Single Day* (Red House); Seane Keane, *The Best Of...* (Grapevine); Harry Manx, *Dog My Cat* (NorthernBlues); Tom Russell, *Borderland* (Hightone Records); Various Artists, *A Nod to Bob* (Red House); Various Artists, *O' Brother Where Art Thou?* (Mercury); Loudon Wainwright, *Last Man On Earth* (Red House). Discoveries: David Francey, Harry Manx, Martina Sorbara.

Vic Bell: Artistic Director, Nickelodeon Folk Club, Calgary.

Kim Barlow, *Gingerbread* (Caribou); The Be Good Tanyas, *Blue Horse* (Nettwerk); Dave Carter and Tracy Grammer, *drum hat buddha* (Signature Sounds); Maria Dunn, *For A Song* (Distant Whisper Music); Bob Dylan, *Love and Theft* (Sony); Stacey Earle and Mark Stewart, *Must Be Live*. (Gearle); David Francey, *Far End Of Summer* (Laker Music);

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Live

With 4 Juno Awards and 10 nominations between them, Bill Bourne, Lester Quitzau and Madagascar Slim are truly major players in the Canadian music scene. Each musician has established himself as a respected artist in such musical genres as Folk, Celtic and World, but they all share an extreme passion for, and knowledge of, the blues. Sweet vocal harmonies and imaginative guitar playing are the hallmark of their music. A double CD recorded live in Germany.



James Keelaghan
Home

James Keelaghan is known for finely crafted songs that travel seamlessly across intimacy and history, and for commanding performances that can leave listeners breathless. This new CD, produced by acclaimed violinist Oliver Schroer, takes James back home to his folk roots and a more traditional sound. It includes six new original songs. James has earned international acclaim for his song writing and performances. He has taken main-stage at some of the world's most prestigious festivals. James Keelaghan is a multiple Juno nominee, and a 1993 Winner.



David Francey
Far End of Summer

When David isn't performing his wonderful songs, he works as a carpenter in rural Quebec. Like his carpentry, David's songs are built to last. They have an economy of expression where the line between craft and art is crossed. It sounds startlingly like folk music, of the kind that kick-started the folk revival in the early 60s, or the kind that Stan Rogers became so justly famous for.

**2002 Juno nominee
& 2002 Indy Award nominee.**



The Wyrd Sisters
Sin & Other Salvations

The Wyrd Sisters have shown that a strong background in songwriting and vocal harmonies is the kind of winning combination that makes them currently one of Canada's most inspiring talents. The group creates a powerful and unique vocal landscape. Their songs appeal to the lover, the fool and the dreamer in all of us. Their voices caress the audience with their spine shivering harmonies, so tight that one voice blends into the other creating a haunting, seductive sound.

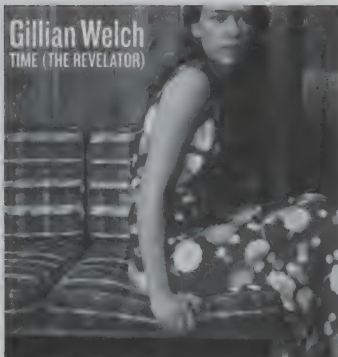
2002 Juno nominee.



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Gillian Welch
TIME (THE REVEALATOR)

Annie Gallun, *Swerve*, (Prime CD); Eileen McGann, *Beyond The Storm* (Dragonwing Music); The Wyrd Sisters, *Sin And Other Salvations* (Wyrd). Discoveries: Groovely, Harry Manx, The Waifs.

Erin Benjamin: Executive Director, Ontario Council of Folk Festivals.

Ryan Adams, *Gold*, (Lost Highway); Be Good Tanyas, *Blue Horse*, (Nettwerk); The Bill Hilly Band, *The Bill Hilly Band* (Independent); Allison Krauss, *New Favourite*, (Rounder); Harry Manx, *Dog My Cat*, (NorthernBlues Music); Nicky Mehta, *Weather Vane*, (Independent); Lynn Miles, *Unravel*, (True North); Ron Sexsmith, *Blue Boy*, Ron (Warner Bros); Gillian Welch, *Time (The Revelator)*, (Stony Plain); Lucinda Williams, *Essence* (Lost Highway). Discoveries: Cara Luft, Harry Manx, Ember Swift.

Don Bird: Artistic Director, Summerfest, Owen Sound.

Susie Arioli Swing Band, *It's Wonderful* (Fleming Artist Man); Kevin Breit, *Folk Alarm* (Poverty Playlist); David Francey, *Far End Of Summer* (Laker Music); Rachel Kane, *All In A Dream* (Independent); Leahy, *Lakefield* (Virgin Records); Harry Manx, *Dog My Cat*, (NorthernBlues Music); John Millard & Happy Day, *John Millard & Happy Day* (Festival); Martina Sorbara, *The Cure For All Bad Deeds* (Little Big Music); Amanda Stott, *Amanda Stott* (Warner Bros.). Discoveries: John Millard & Happy Day.

Roddy Campbell: Editor, Penguin Eggs.

Afro Celt Sound System, *Vol 3: Further In Time* (Real World); Be Good Tanyas, *Blue Horse* (Network); Manu Chao, *Proxima Estacion Esperanza* (Virgin); Maria Dunn, *For A Song* (Distant Whisper Music); David Francey, *Far End Of Summer* (Laker Music); Baaba Maal, *Missing You* (Ryko/Palm); Gigi, *Gigi* (Ryko/Palm); Joe Strummer & The Mescaleros, *Global A Gogo* (Hellcat); Martin Simpson, *The Bramble Briar* (Topic); Kate

PENGUIN EGGS

Rusby, *Little Lights* (Pure). Discoveries: Be Good Tanyas, David Francey, The Waifs.

Lark Clark: Radio host, CKUA, Alberta.

Boozoo Chavis, *Down Home On Dog Hill*, (Rounder); Steve Dawson, *Bug Parade*, (Black Hen Music); Orlando Cachaito Lopez, *Cachaito* (World Circuit/Nonesuch); Ray Lema & Tyour Gnaoua, *Safi* (Buda Musique/Tinder); N'Java, *Source* (EMI Hemisphere); Paul Reddick & The Sidemen, *Rattlebag* (Northern Blues); Susheela Raman, *Salt Rain*, (Narada World); Jill Scott, *Who Is Jill Scott?*, Words & Sounds, Vol.1 (Hidden Bend Recordings); Te Vaka, *Te Vaka* (Independent); Tom Wilson, *Planet Love* (Sony). Discoveries: Susheela Raman, Jill Scott, Te Vaka.

Kerry Clarke: Associate Producer of the Calgary Folk Music Festival and Radio host, CJSW, Calgary.

James Blood Ulmer, *Memphis Blood: Sun Sessions* (Label M); Manu Chao, *Proxima Estacion: Esperanza* (Virgin); Olu Dara, *Neighborhoods* (WEA/Atlantic); Christine Graves, *Stray* (Brave Music); Handsome Family, *Twilight September* (Carrot Top); Martyn Joseph, *Don't Talk About Love* (Pipe Records); Sorten Muld, *III* (Northside); 3 Mustaphas 3, *Play Musty For Me* (Kartini/Northside); Gillian Welch, *Time (the Revelator)*, (Stony Plain); Jim White, *No Such Place* (Luaka Bop). Discoveries: Tar Box Ramblers, Petrona Martinez, Mercedes Peón.

Paul-Emile Comeau: Freelance

Journalist, The Village Voice, Dirty Linen. . . Bob Dylan, *Love and Theft* (Sony); Lo Jo, *Bohème de Crystal* (World Village); Matapat, *Petit Fou* (Borealis); Buddy & Julia Miller, *Buddy & Julia Miller* (High Tone); Montcorbier, *Le Piano de Sarah* (S.R.I.); Paul Reddick and The Sidemen, *Rattlebag* (Northern Blues); Shaver, *The Earth Rolls On* (New West); Ian Tamblyn, *Voice in the Wilderness* (North Track); Doc Watson, *At Gerdes Folk City* (Sugar Hill); Luther Wright & The Wrongs, *Rebuild the Wall* (Universal). Discoveries: The Bill Hilly Band, Gary Comeau, Harry Manx.

Doug Cox: Artistic Director of The Vancouver Island Musicfest and Victoria's Rootsfest

Rani Arbo and Daisy Mayhem, *Cocktail Swing* (Signature Sounds); Long John Baldry, *Remembering Leadbelly* (Stony Plain); Rodney Crowell, *The Houston Kid* (Sugar Hill); Michael Franti and Spearhead, *Stay Human* (Six Degrees); The Gourds, *Shinebox* (Sugar Hill); The Holmes Brothers, *Speaking In Tongues* (Stony Plain); Kathy Kallick, *My Mother's Voice*, (Copper Creek); Various Artists, *A Nod To Bob*, (Red House); Loudon

Wainwright III, *Last Man On Earth* (Red House); Michelle Willson & The Evil Gal Festival Orchestra, *Wake Up Call* (Bullseye). Discoveries: Mary Gauthier, Michael Franti and Spearhead, Lisa Haley and the Zydecats.

Tom Coxworth: Radio host, Folk Routes, CKUA, Alberta

Dave Carter & Tracy Grammer, *drum hat buddha* (Signature); Casey Chambers, *The Captain* (Warner Bros); Maria Dunn, *For A Song* (Distant Whisper); David Francey, *Far End Of Summer* (Laker Music); Mary Gauthier, *Drag Queens in Limousines* (Groove House); Lynn Miles, *Unravel* (True North); Tom Russell, *Borderland* (Hightone); Mike Stack, *I Need Wheels* (Independent); Brent Titcomb, *Beyond Appearances* (Independent); Various Artists, *O Brother Where Art Thou?* (Mercury). Discoveries: Martyn Joseph, Joy Norman, Mike Stack.

Ian Davis: Freelance Journalist and co-Artistic Director of The Cuckoo's Nest Folk Club, Hamilton

Battlefield Band, *Happy Daze* (Temple); Jane Bunnett, *Alma de Santiago* (EMI); Martin Carthy, *The Carthy Chronicles* (Free Reed); Dervish, *Midsummer's Night* (Compass); Maria Dunn, *For a Song* (Festival); David Francey, *Far End Of Summer* (Laker/Festival); Lunasa, *The Merry Sisters of Fate* (Green Linnet); Roger McGuinn, *Songs from the Folk Den* (Applesseed); Maria Muldaur, *Richland Woman Blues* (Stony Plain); Maura O'Connell, *Walls & Windows* (Sugar Hill). Discoveries: Nancy Kerr & James Fagan, Allison Lupton, Sangsters.

Andy Donnelly: Radio host, The Celtic Show, CKUA, Alberta

The Fables, *A Time* (Tidemark); David Francey, *Far End Of Summer* (Laker Music); The Fullmoon Ensemble, *Through Lands And Waters Wide* (Independent); Phamie Gow, *Lammermuir* (Greentrax); The Mahones, *Here Comes Lucky* (True North); Mairi MacInnes, *Orosay* (Greentrax); Garnet Rogers, *Firefly*





(Snow Goose); Various Artists, Scots Women: Live From Celtic Connections (*Greentrax*); Derek Williamson, Word of Mouth (*Lazy Mist*); Andy White, *Speechless* (Womad Select). Discoveries: Derek Williamson, Jen Kratz, Ceili Rain.

Steve Edge: Radio host, Edge On Folk, CiTR, Vancouver, and Artistic Director, Rogue Folk Club, Vancouver

Afro Celt Sound System, *Vol 3: Further In Time* (Real World); Bill Hilly Band, *Bill Hilly Band* (Independent); La Bottine Souriante, *Cordial* (Mille Pattes); E2K, *Shift*

(Topic); Gigi, *Gigi* (Palm Pictures); Habib Koite, *Baro* (Putumayo); Paddy Keenan & Tommy O'Sullivan, *Long Grazing Acre* (Hot Cunya); Lunasa, *The Merry Sisters of Fate* (Green Linnet); Kate Rusby, *Little Lights* (Compass); Joe Strummer & The Mescaleros, *Global a Gogo* (Hellcat). Discoveries: Bill Hilly Band, David Francey, Laio.

Judy Erlam: President Salmon Arm Folk Music Society

Afro Celt Sound System, *Volume 3: Further in Time* (Real World); Baaba Maal, *Missing You*, (Palm Pictures); Harry Manx, *Dog My Cat*, (NorthernBlues Music); Dave Matthews Band, *Everyday* (RCA / BMG); N'Java, *Source* (Hemisphere); Kelly Joe Phelps, *Sky Like A Broken Clock* (Ryko); Radio Tarifa, *Cruzando El Rio* (Warner Bros); Kate Rusby, *Little Lights* (Compass); Three Mustaphas Three, *Play Musty for Me* (Omnium); Gillian Welch, *Time (The Revelator)*, (Stony Plain). Discoveries: Harry Manx, N'Java, The Waifs.

Rick Fenton: Artistic Director, The Winnipeg Folk Music Festival

The Be Good Tanyas, *Blue Horse* (Network); Jane Bunnett, *Alma De Santiago* (EMI); Luc Doucet, *Aloha Manitoba* (Independent); Sue Foley, *Love Comin' Down*

(Shanachie); Carlos Del Junco, *Up and At 'Em* (Big Reed Records); Danny Michel, *In the Belly of a Whale* (Independent); Emeline Michel, *Cordes Et Arne* (Cheval De Fev); Ron Sexsmith, *Blue Boy* (Warner Bros); The Wyrd Sisters, *Sin and Other Salvations* (Independent). Discoveries: The Be Good Tanyas, Luc Doucet, Danny Michel.

Richard Flohili: Publicist, Toronto

Annie Burns, *Days in Italy* (Independent); Dave Carter & Tracey Grammer, *drum, hat, buddha* (Signature Sounds); Bob Dylan, *Love and Theft* (Sony); Isaac Freeman and the Bluebloods, *Beautiful Stars* (Dead Reckoning); John Hammond, *Wicked Grin* (*Pointblank*); Jimmy LaFave, *Texoma* (Bohemia Beat); Patty Loveless, *Mountain Soul* (Sony); Oh Susanna, *Sleepy Little Sailor* (Square Dog); Tom Russell, *Borderland* (Hightone); Loudon Wainwright, *The Last Man on Earth* (Red House). Discoveries: Dave Carter and Tracey Grammer, Nicky Mehta, Ann Vriend.

Fish Griwkowsky: Freelance Journalist and Photographer, The Edmonton Sun, Vanity Fair . . .

Honeyboy Edwards, *Mississippi Delta Bluesman* (Smithsonian/Folkways); Bonnie Prince Billy, *Ease on Down the Road* (Palace); Merle Haggard, *Roots Volume 1* (Epitaph); Kris

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Kristofferson, *Kristofferson* (Legacy); Lyle Lovett, *Anthology Volume 1, Cowboy Man* (MCA); Sonny Rhodes, *A Good Day to Play the Blues* (Stony Plain); Shaver, *The Earth Rolls On* (New West); Various Artists, *Bound For Movin' On* (BMG); Various Artists, *Concerts for a Landmine Free World* (Vanguard); Gillian Welch, *Time (The Revelator)*, (Stony Plain); Lucinda Williams, *Essence* (Lost Highway). Discoveries: Danielson Family, Royal City, Lynn Miles.

Cam Hayden: Radio host, Friday Night Blues Party, CKUA, Alberta, and Artistic Director of Labatts International Blues Festival, Edmonton.

John Campbelljohn, *Nerves Of Steel*, (Taxim); Deborah Coleman, *Live! On Love*, (Blind Pig); Robben Ford and the Ford Blues Band, *A Tribute to Paul Butterfield*, (Blue Rock 'it); Dr. John, *Creole Moon*, (Blue Note); Beau Kavanagh and the Broken Hearted, *Vibra King Blues*, (Justin Time); Delbert McClinton, *Nothing Personal*, (New West); Maria Muldaur, *Richland Woman Blues*, (Stony Plain); Kid Ramos, *Greasy Kid Stuff*, (Evidence); Paul Reddick & The Sidemen, *Rattlebag*, (NorthernBlues). Discoveries: Janiva Magness, Rusty Zinn..

Roger Levesque: Freelance Journalist, The Edmonton Journal, Radio host, CJSR, Edmonton.

Eric Bibb, *Painting Signs* (Earthbeat); Blind Boys Of Alabama, *Spirit Of The Century* (Real World); La Bottine Souriante, *Cordial* (EMI); Orlando Cachaito Lopez, *Cachaito* (World Circuit); Odetta, *Lookin' For A Bone* (M.C. Records); Kelly Joe Phelps, *Sky Like A Broken Clock* (Ryko); Shoglenifty, *Solar Shears* (Compass); Temple Of Sound & Rizwan-Muazzam Qawwali, *People's Colony No. 1* (Real World); Vaseen, *Live* (Northside); Moreno Veloso, *Music Typewriter* (Hannibal). Discoveries: Stacey Earle, Kate Rusby, The Waifs.

Tony Montague: Freelance journalist, Georgia Straight, Globe & Mail, Penguin Eggs, iRoots. . .

Kiran Ahluwalia, *Kashish Attraction* (Independent); Gigi, *Gigi* (Palm Pictures); Habib Koité and Bamada, *Baro* (Putumayo); Lúna, *The Merry Sisters of Fate* (Green Linnet); Baaba Maal, *Missing You* (Palm Pictures); Ranarim, *Till the Light of Day* (Northside); La Bottine Souriante, *Cordial* (Mille-Pattes); Moreno Veloso + 2, *Music Typewriter* (Hannibal); Loudon Wainwright III, *Last Man On Earth* (Red House); Eyuphuro Yellela, *Eyuphuro*, (World Music Network). Discoveries: Gigi, Moreno Veloso + 2, Kiran Ahluwalia.

Peter North: Freelance Journalist, The Edmonton Journal, See. . .

Rodney Crowell, *Houston Kid*, (Sugar Hill); *Wayfaring Strangers*, *Shifting Sands of Time*, (Rounder); Buddy and Julie Miller, *Buddy & Judy Miller* (Hightone); Chris Thile, *Not All Who Wander Are Lost* (Sugar Hill); Maria Muldaur, *Richland Woman Blues* (Stony Plain Records); Shaver, *The Earth Rolls On* (New West); John Hammond, *Wicked Grin* (Pointblank); Gillian Welch, *Time (The Revelator)*, (Stony Plain Records); Maura O'Connell, *Walls and Windows* (Sugar Hill); Various Artists, *Avalon Blues: A Tribute To Mississippi John Hurt* (Vanguard). Discoveries: Matt Flinger, Yonder Mountain String Band, Blue Highway.

Staff at Megatunes, Calgary.

Ryan Adams, *Gold* (Lost Highway); The Co-Dependents, *Live Recording Event* (Indelible); Alejandro Escovedo, *A Man Under The Influence* (Bloodshot); David Gray, *White Ladder* (RCA); Alison Krauss, *New Favorite* (Rounder); John Hammond, *Wicked Grin* (Pointblank); Steve Pineo, *A Perfectly Good Friendship* (Indelible); Lester Quitau, *So Here We Are* (Festival); Karl Roth, *Almost Behavin'* (Too Hot Music); Lucinda Williams, *Essence* (Lost Highway). Discoveries: Harry Manx, Jay Farrar, Hank Williams III.

Donald Teplyske: Freelance Journalist Red Deer Advocate, Penguin Eggs. . . V.P. Waskasoo Bluegrass Music Society, Red Deer. Blue Highway, *Still Climbing Mountains* (Rounder); Paul Burch, *Last Of My Kind* (Merge); Ron Block, *Faraway Land* (Rounder); Maria Dunn, *For A Song* (Distant Whisper); Charlie Hase & Craig McKerron, *Alternate Roots* (Active Pass); Shaver, *The Earth Rolls On* (New West); Slowdrag, *Ploughin' It Right To The Fence* (Corvus); Various Artists, *Avalon Blues: A Tribute To Mississippi John Hurt* (Vanguard); Gillian Welch, *Time (The Revelator)*, (Stony Plain). Discoveries: Craig McKerron & Koralee Tonack, House Concerts, The Crooked Jades.

Tim Readman: Musician and Penguin Eggs contributor

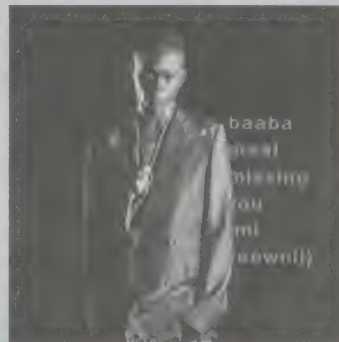
Arrogant Worms, *Idiot Road*, (Independent); Steve Ashley, *Everday Lives* (Topic); Eliza Carthy, *Angels and Cigarettes*, (Warner Bros); Dervish, *Midsummer's Night*, (Compass); Maria Dunn, *For A Song* (Distant Whisper Music); Laio, *Laio* (Independent); Lunasa, *The Merry Sisters of Fate*, (Green Linnet); Shoglenifty, *Solar Shears*, (Greentrax); Wayfaring Strangers, *Shifting Sands of Time* (Rounder); Gillian Welch, *Time (The Revelator)*, (Stony Plain). Discoveries: Laio, Gillian Frame and Back of the Moon, The Bill Hilly Band.

Mike Regenstreif: Radio host, Folk Roots/Folk Branches, CKUT, Montreal and Freelance Journalist, Montreal Gazette, Sing Out! . . .

Chava Alberstein, *Foreign Letters* (Rounder); Michael Jerome Browne, *Drive On* (Borealis); David Francey, *Far End of Summer* (Laker); Maria Muldaur, *Richland Woman Blues* (Stony Plain); Tom Paxton & Anne Hills, *Under American Skies* (Appleseed); Garnet Rogers, *Firefly* (Snow Goose); Tom Russell, *Borderland* (Hightone); The Wayfaring Strangers, *Shifting Sands of Time* (Rounder); Gillian Welch, *Time (The Revelator)*, (Stony Plain); Jesse Winchester, *Live From Mountain Stage* (Blue Plate). Discoveries: The Wayfaring Strangers, Perla Batalla, The Undertakin' Daddies.

Bob Remington: Journalist, The National Post.

Rodney Crowell, *The Houston Kid* (Sugar Hill); Ginny Hawker, *Letters From My Father* (Rounder); Karl Shiflet and Big Country Show, *In Full Color* (Rebel); Various Artists, *Blue Trail of Sorrow* (Rounder); Various Artists, *O' Brother Where Art Thou?* (Mercury); Various Artists, *O' Sister* (Rounder); Rhonda Vincent, *The Storm Still Rages* (Rounder); The Wayfaring Strangers, *Shifting Sands of Time* (Rounder); Gillian Welch, *Time (The Revelator)*, (Stony Plain);





Dolly Parton, *Little Sparrow* (Sugar Hill). Discoveries: Ginny Hawker, Dirk Powell, Ron Ickes.

Les Siemieniuk: General Manager of the Calgary Folk Music Festival, broadcaster and journalist Penguin Eggs

Ryan Adams, *Gold* (Lost Highway Records); The Co-Dependents, *Live Recording Event* (Indelible); David Francey, *The Far Side Of Summer* (Laker Music); Don Freed and the Kids of Northern Saskatchewan, *Our Very Own Songs* (Bush League); Danny Michel, *In the belly of the Whale* (Independent); Lynn

Miles, *Unravel* (True North); Bill Morrissey, *Something I Saw or Thought I Saw* (Philo); Garnet Rogers, *Firefly*, (Snow Goose); Ian Tambllyn, *Voice in the Wilderness* (North Track); Jim White, *No Such Place*, (Luaka Bop). Discoveries: Dave Carter and Tracey Grammer, Kasey Chambers, Danny Michel.

Dugg Simpson: Artistic Director, Vancouver Folk Music Festival.

Kim Barlow, *Gingerbread* (Caribou); Jane Bunnnett, Alma de Santiago (EMI); Sheila Chandra *This Sentence Is True...*, (Shakti); Manu Chao, *Proxima Estacion Esperanza* (Virgin); David Francey, *Far End Of Summer* (Laker); Andrea Koziol, *Simple* (Big Ass); Kelly Joe Phelps *Sky Like A Broken Clock*, (Ryko); John Reischman and the Jaybirds, *John Reischman and the Jaybirds* (Corvus); Twilight Circus Dub Sound System, *Volcanic Dub* (M); Temple of Sound & Rizwan-Muazzam Qawwali, *People's Colony No. 1* (Real World). Discoveries: Bitch and Animal, Tanya Tagaq Gillis, Ugarte Anaiak.

Rana Sodhi and Steve Pritchard:

Artistic directors of The Flying Cloud Folk Club, Toronto.

Afro Celt Sound System, *Vol. 3: Further in Time* (Real World); Battlefield Band, *Happy Daze* (Temple); Blacks Mountain, *Barin' the Soles* (Independent); Flapjack, *Flapjack*

(Independent); David Francey, *Far End of Summer* (Laker Music); Dick Gaughan, *Outlaws and Dreamers* (Applesseed Recordings); Ralph Stanley and Friends, *Clinch Mountain Sweethearts* (Rebel) Various Artists, *O' Brother Where Art Thou?* (Mercury); Rhonda Vincent, *The Storm Still Rages* (Rounder); Doc Watson, *At Gerdes Folk City* (Sugar Hill). Discoveries: Flapjack, Backstabbers Stringband, Blacks Mountain.

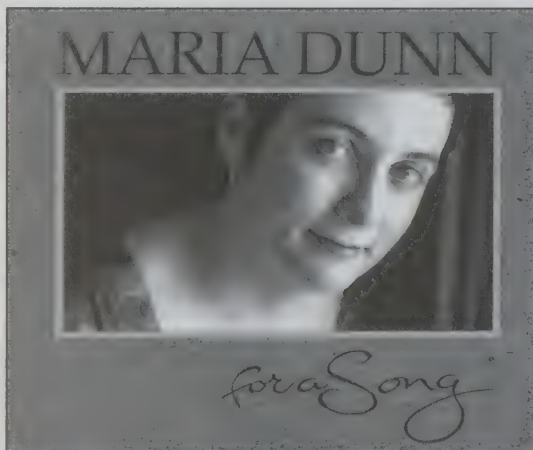
Sandy Stiff: Radio host, CJSR, Edmonton, and Penguin Eggs contributor.

Dave Carter and Tracey Grammer, *drum hat buddha* (Signature Sounds); John Doyle, *Evening Comes Early* (Shanachie); Maria Dunn, *For a Song* (Distant Whisper Music); David Francey, *Far End of Summer* (Laker Music); Hoven Droven, *Hippa* (Northside); Lunasa, *The Merry Sisters of Fate* (Green Linnet); Baaba Maal, *Missing You* (Palm Pictures); Old Blind Dogs, *fit!* (Green Linnet); Kate Rusby, *Little Lights* (Compass); Karen Tweed and Timo Alakotila, *May Monday* (Northside). Discoveries: Joe Bishop and Kendall Sullivan, Be Good Tanyas, Tim Eriksen (solo).

Eric Thom: Freelance Journalist,

Penguin Eggs Contributor

Kasey Chambers, *The Captain* (Warner Bros); Alejandro Escovedo, *A Man Under The*



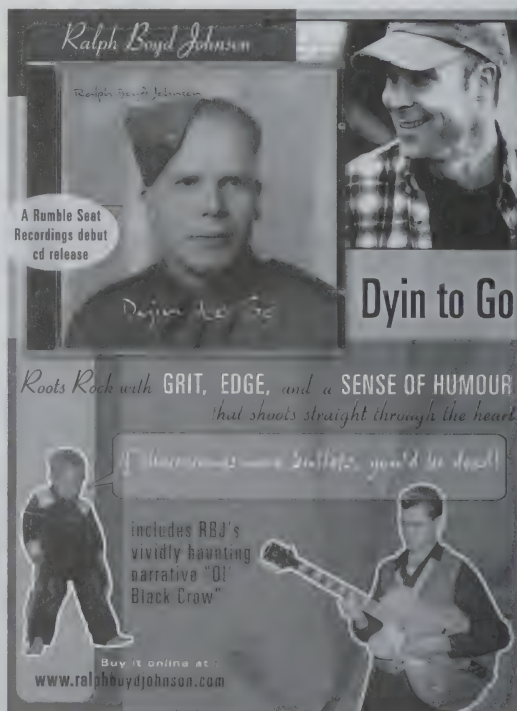
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Influence (Bloodshot); John Hartford, *Hamilton Ironworks* (Rounder); Laura Nyro, *Angel In The Dark* (Rounder); Maura O'Connell, *Walls And Windows* (Sugar Hill); Paul Reddick & The Sidemen, *Rattlebag* (Northern Blues); Mike Stern, *Voices* (Division One/Atlantic); Various Artists, *Avalon Blues: A Tribute To The Music Of Mississippi John Hurt* (Vanguard); Various Artists, *Roots Music: An American Journey* (Rounder); Steve Wynn, *Here Come The Miracles* (Blue Rose); Discoveries: Lester Quitau, Isaac & Blewett, Scott Miller & The Commonwealth.

Richard Thornley: Penguin Eggs contributor.

Dave Carter and Tracy Grammer, *drum hat buddha* (Signature Sounds); Rodney Crowell, *The Houston Kid* (Sugar Hill); John Doyle, *Evening Comes Early* (Shanachie); David Francey, *Far End of Summer* (Laker Music); Fun>Da>Mental, *There Shall Be Love* (Nation); Lunasa, *The Merry Sisters of Fate* (Green Linnet); Old Blind Dogs, *fit!* (Green Linnet); Joe Strummer and The Mescaleros, *Global A Go-Go* (Hellcat Records); Rachid Taha, *Made in Medina* (Universal); Karen Tweed and Timo Alakotila, *May Monday* (Northside); Discoveries: Ni Sarpe Ni Branche, Dave McCann, Shooogenifty.

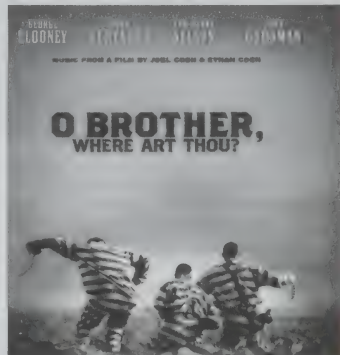
David Ward: Radio host, Bluegrass State to Mind, CKUA, Alberta.

Bob Dylan, *Love and Theft* (Sony); Maria Dunn, *For A Song* (Distant Whisper Music); Patty Loveless, *Mountain Soul* (Sony); Del McCoury Band, *Del and the Boys* (Rounder); Steve Pineo, *A Perfectly Good Friendship* (Indelible); John Reischman and The Jaybirds, *John Reischman and The Jaybirds* (Corvus); Various Artists, *Down From The Mountain* (Mercury); Various Artists, *O' Brother, Where Art Thou?* (Mercury); Gillian Welch, *Time (The Revelator)*, (Stony Plain); Lucinda Williams, *Essence* (Lost Highway). Discoveries: David Francey, Steve Pineo, Ann Friend.

Terry Wickham: Artistic Director of The Edmonton and Calgary Folk Music Festivals.

Maria Dunn, *A Song For You*, (Distant Whisper Music); Bob Dylan, *Love and Theft* (Sony); Alpha Yaya Diallo, *The Journey* (Jericho Beach); David Francey, *The Far End of Summer* (Laker Music); Gigi, *Gigi*, (Palm Pictures); Patty Loveless, *Mountain Soul* (Sony); Baaba Maal, *Missing You* (Palm Pictures); Natalie Merchant, *Motherland* (Warner Bros); Super Rail Band, *Mansa*, () Gilliam Welch, *Time (The Revelator)*, (Stony Plain). Discoveries: David Carter & Tracy Grammer, David Francey, The Waifs.

Gene Willburn: Author of *A Northern Journey*. David Francey, *Far End of Summer* (Laker Music); Anne Lederman, *7 Cats* (Independent); Eileen McGann, *Beyond the Storm* (Dragonwing Music); Steve Pineo, *A Perfectly Good Friendship* (Indelible); David Rogers, *The Chase* (Independent); Ron Sexsmith, *Blue Boy* (Warner Bros); Mike Stevens, *The World Is Only Air* (Borealis); Ian Tamblyn, *Voice in the Wilderness* (North Track); April Verch, *Verchusosity* (Independent); Ken Whiteley, *Listening* (Broealis). Discoveries: Magoo, Steve Dawson, Oh Susanna.



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The Fables

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Sunday, April 21 - James Keelaghan

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THE KEELAGHAN CHRONICLES

On the verge of becoming a weird, world-weary folk wraith, James Keelaghan took stock of what mattered most. He now tells Roddy Campbell about masquerading as Little Jimmy Hardy – a wrestler one step away from fame and fortune in the WWF – and a blue-eyed dog called Sinatra.

Let no one dispute the fact, James Keelaghan deserves the same exalted status afforded Stan Rogers, Ian Tyson and even, when it warrants, Gordon Lightfoot.

Quite apart from *Cold Missouri Waters* and *Jenny Bryce*, Keelaghan has produced some of the finest social, political and historical Canadian folk songs imaginable that, no doubt, will end up years hence credited to that hoary old gent, Trad Arr. . .

A likable lad on all counts, his songs appeal to as broad a spectrum as American

singer-songwriter Dar Williams and English political commentator Roy Bailey. Recognition has also come in the form of several Juno nominations and a win for *My Skies* in 1994. As it will soon become immediately obvious, his latest release, *Home*, will unquestionably receive due consideration for further accolades.

'Home is where the heart is,' as the old saying goes, and at the heart of *Home* beats Keelaghan's indisputable mastery of historical balladry. It's a clear-cut departure from the personal, inward-looking aspect of its predecessor, *Road* – a disc formed from the fallout of almost losing his father and having his marriage dissolve.

'I'd been blindly traipsing through life being the touring musician guy and all of a sudden got slapped in the face. My dad got sick and my marriage ended. There was a friend die and there were friends I had lost touch with who had momentous things happen in their lives that I had no idea about. I just realized I was turning into some kind of weird

folk, wraith," says Keelaghan.

"I think *Road* was a release for me. I had gotten some of the personal writing out of the way. I was getting tired of the historical stuff, because in some ways it was too easy. I wanted to take a little bit of time off from that and it felt right to come back to it, back to the roots, both in terms of the stories and in terms of the instrumentation. It was time to go back into that well."

And he has done so in no uncertain terms. Just for starters, the new disc offers a trio of breathtaking ballads: *October 70*, *Sinatra And I* and *Stonecutters*.

Talks with Ontario-based folk singer and stonemason, Bobby Watt, provided the initial spark for *Stonecutters* – a heart breaking account of the life and times of a master stonemason who watched his apprentices march to war as he built the Peace Tower in Ottawa between 1916 and 1921.

"The interesting part of these conversations for me, was when Bobby told me the part of there being no apprentices working on the job when they rebuilt the Parliament Buildings in 1916, because of the war. As a matter of fact, . . . there was no men under 40 that worked on it. That to me was just amazing."

While *Sinatra And I* may not pack the same emotional wallop, nonetheless, it remains a captivating piece of storytelling as it follows a drifter from the industrial shores of New Jersey, north to Canada to settle amidst the isolated tranquility of the Yukon with only a dog for company. And to think it resulted from a whimsical challenge from friends.

"They said, 'Write a song about a dog and the dog can't die (he laughs).' It just so happened within a week of that I ended up in the company of a whole bunch of huskies – all blue eyes. And I said, 'If I ever had a blue-eyed dog, I'd call him Sinatra.' And I went, 'Oh, wait a minute!' Then the first part of the song, the part of the factory being blown up, was basically something that happened to a friend of mine. That's how they came to live where they lived under these circumstances – the sky exploded and they thought, 'It's time to leave.' And they drove and ended up in northern Canada."

October 70 (pronounced Seven-o) is a whole different kettle of custard all together. It opens from the point of view of a naive 10-year-old paperboy in Western Canada delivering the three-inch headline, "Cross is Free" – a reference to the release of British trade commissioner James Cross, kidnapped by the FLQ.



James Keelaghan

While the song makes no mention of the simultaneous abduction and murder of Quebec cabinet minister Pierre Laporte, as it evolves, Keelaghan offers a sympathetic and riveting look at the same issue from the perspective of Quebec's downtrodden – *Les Negres Blancs d'Amerique* – as their basic rights and freedoms are suspended by the War Measures Act.

"It's the one event of my youth that was always coming up in my mind – throwing that paper down in front of the doors. I was obsessed with that headline for so long, 'Cross is Free'. That was how I built the song, just from that experience. It wasn't that I was trying to avoid Laporte or anything it was just for me the whole thing was about that headline."

"Actually, I think what it's really about is that [the government] suspended civil liberties. They locked up people in jail without charge. And for me, in Western Canada, that meant one thing when I was that age. But with the distance of time, 'Whoa! That's pretty heavy.' And the guy delivering papers in Quebec probably had a different view of it from I had. It's about those two diametrically opposed viewpoints and coming around in later life to realize, 'Yeah, that was a pretty horrendous thing to happen.'"

Quite aside from its lyrical content, what makes *October 70* such a gloriously gripping track is producer Oliver Schroer's enthralling, Cajun-Acadian fiddle back-beat.

"I wanted something a little bit dirtier than a Cape Breton or an Ottawa Valley fiddle," says Keelaghan. "And in order for it to work, it had to have that slur in it. It had to be like a foot sliding along the ground."

Surprisingly, two traditional songs, *The Flowers of Magherally* and *Henry's Downfall*, also appear on *Home*. They are the first traditional pieces he has recorded since *Follow Me Up To Carlow* appeared on *Timelines* in 1987. "Yeah, I read that in Penguin Eggs and I went, 'No.' Then I went, 'Yeah. It's true.'" Still, he concedes toying with the idea of an all-traditional album once he collects the material.

A trip to Tuva to study throat-singing, apparently is also on the cards. . . nah, not really. I just made that bit up. There is, however, throat-singing on the conclusion of his cover of Ian Tamblin's mighty *Woodsmoke And Oranges*. As it turns out, it wasn't Tuvans or Inuit but Keelaghan and Oliver Schroer. It certainly fooled one critic working from an advance release. Fair play to them. Who else could pull a sophisticated stroke like that with such dignity? And who but Keelaghan has the foresight to unearth such a long forgotten treasure?

"I think Ian is just an incredible writer, probably the best landscape writer we have because he can really take you somewhere with these words and plunk you right in it."

And while he's at it, David Francey comes in for equal measures of merit too.

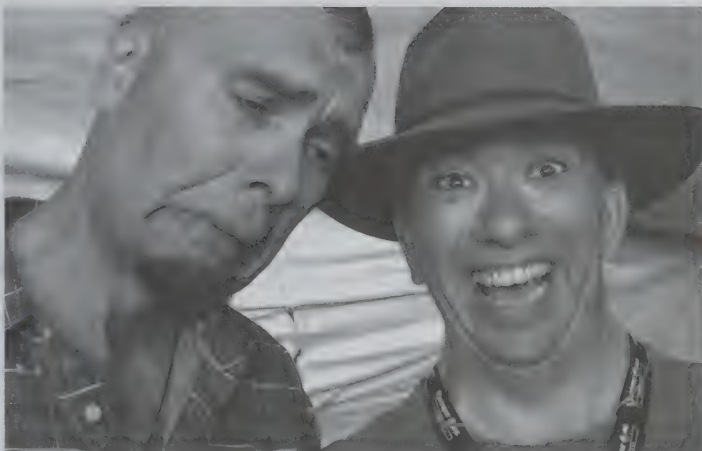


Photo: Angela Browne

Keelaghan sings on Francey's current release, *Far End Of Summer*. And Francey's joyful celebration of spring, *Red-wing Blackbird*, opens *Home*.

"David is the most natural writer that I have ever met in my life. There's no pretense in what he writes. There's no tricks. He just writes what he feels and it comes out sounding like that. And to me, that is just an amazing thing. . . He's a totally genuine human being as well. What you see is what you get. He's just got such a great soul."

James Keelaghan grew up in Calgary, the son of an English mother and an Irish father. His father instilled a love of traditional music from the songs of The Dubliners, The Clancy Brothers and The Watsons. He also taught James how to tell stories and provided an appreciation for the past. As a result, his son studied history at the U of C.

Around the same time, Keelaghan thrashed away on a double-necked acoustic guitar, *a la* Jimmy Page, in local delis and turned up regularly at the Calgary Folk Club to hear the likes of Martin Simpson, June Tabor and the late Stan Rogers. With Rogers as an appropriate role model, Keelaghan's song writing flourished. I still have a post card somewhere from young master Keelaghan, a touch miffed at the comparisons to Rogers I wrote in a review for The Edmonton Journal. Sometimes never change.

"There's no doubt that for a whole generation of us he was the guy. You couldn't help but go, 'Wow!' He changed the way we all thought about the male singer-songwriter. I have to say at the same time, I never really saw the comparison. I think it was just the time. I started coming up in '85, '86 and that was so close to when he had passed on. People were just looking and going, 'Oh'."

Timelines was released in 1987 and proved an impressive debut. Its highlights included *Jenny Bryce*, *Fires of Calais* and

Wlad The Impailer & Little Jimmy Hardy

Boom Goes To Bust. Garnet Rogers covered *Jenny Bryce* and Christy Moore added it to his live repertoire. It's an LP Keelaghan still looks on fondly despite "that bell-like little tenor guy."

Small Rebellions followed three years later. And talk about a giant leap forward. . . The same emotional hack who taunted him about Stan Rogers now declared Keelaghan an erm. . . "national treasure." Bloody hell. No matter, for the first time in recent memory, folk songs were being written again about Canadian labour history. *Hillcrest Mines* and *Small Rebellion* were, and still are, exceptional songs. Roy Bailey covered the later. *Rebecca's Lament* and *Red River Rising* too enjoyed lavish praise.

"I think I had settled in by that point and I had a clearer idea of what it was I liked doing and what I wanted to do. . . I matured as near as I can tell and I got more focused on what I was trying to say."

It took *My Skies*, though, to earn Keelaghan a Juno in 1994 for Best Roots Traditional Recording (Solo). The competition that year included Bruce Cockburn, Garnet Rogers and a posthumous Stan Rogers live recording.

"I don't think I ever felt as honored as I did when I got that first nomination. It absolutely floored me. And to actually win was like a dream to me. I hope everybody has the chance to have that experience."

Three years later, *A Recent Future* also received a Juno nomination. Its undeniable crowning glory was *Cold Missouri Waters* – the brilliant and succinct story of the Mann Gulch forest fire in Montana in 1949 that claimed the lives of 12 smokejumpers. It's told through the eyes of the crew chief Wag Dodge, one of only three to survive the tragedy. Cry, Cry, Cry – the U.S. trio of Dar Williams, Lucy Kaplansky, and Richard Shindell covered it on their acclaimed debut.

"I loved hearing that song sung with an American accent. It just made it for me in a way me singing it just never did. It was a total honour. That song has opened a lot of doors. There's a lot of people in the States come out to the concerts on the strength of that song."

Like almost every other folk singer before him, James Keelaghan started out as a solo performer. But with the increased success *Small Rebellions* brought, he recruited a trio to solidify his sound. By the mid to latter part of the '90s, though, he preferred the company of Chilean guitar whizz, Oscar Lopez. Together they recorded *Compadres* in 1997, which also earned a Juno nomination.

Soon enough, each shifted their focus back to their distinct careers. Keelaghan now turned to Toronto fiddler and producer, Oliver Schroer, to beef up his live performances. And most recently, Keelaghan toured intimate select dates across North America with England's Jez Lowe.

But that was a brief outing before the industrial strength tours to promote *Home* begins in earnest. Hugh MacMillan of

Spirit of the West and Schroer will accompany Keelaghan this time around.

"Touring with various partners adds on a number of different levels. One, it really adds to the stalk of stories because funny, funny, funny things happen on the road. . . Oliver and I, on the *Road* tour, ended up doing a whole string of dates in the interior of BC. We'd go into small towns - a great string-bean of a guy with a Mohawk haircut, and a long-haired guy with the world's hugest neck walk into the diner.


"It would always get the better of waitresses and they'd say, 'What do you do?' And we'd say, 'Musicians.' And the service would drop right off. And one place we went into I looked at the waitress and said, 'We're wrestlers.' And she said, 'Really?' And I said, 'Yeah, he's Vlad the Impaler and I'm Young Jimmy Hardy.'

'Are you guys WWF?'

'No. No. We're working our way up.'

"And it was like being gods."

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Mercedes Sosa

Chimes of Freedom

Sting's pal, singer Mercedes Sosa, spent years persecuted by Argentina's brutal military junta. Now an international celebrity, she continues to sing for all of the oppressed. Tony Montague catches up with 'The voice to inspire a revolution'.

When asked about the principal influences on their art, most musicians mention other musicians. But Mercedes Sosa, Argentina's most celebrated singer, casts her net far wider. "My inspiration has come not only from composers but from poets, from writers, sculptors and painters," she says, on the line from her home in Buenos Aires. "And also from certain places, like Tucumán which is where I come from."

Sosa was born in the city, in the north-west of Argentina, on the 9th of July, a highly significant date in the nation's history. "It's our

independence day, and Tucumán is where it was first sworn, in 1816," Sosa explains. "The town is also celebrated for its university. The students come not only from Argentina but also Peru and Bolivia, and they were particularly badly persecuted by the junta [which ruled Argentina 1976-82]. Like my city I've been marked with a destiny that's difficult and beautiful."

It will no doubt surprise many of her fans to know that in the 1950s, after leaving school, Sosa worked as a dance teacher. She still moves across the concert stage with a poise and nimble step that many younger - and smaller - women would envy. Sosa also started singing at an early age. "I always enjoyed singing for friends. At age 20 I won a contest, and the prize was a two-month contract with a local radio station. It wasn't until 1965 that I made my professional debut at a regional folk music festival in Cosquín. That's when La Nueva Canción [the New Song movement] really got going."

Nueva Canción was a fellowship of musi-

cians and poets who were politically and socially "engaged" during a turbulent period, when the southern cone of the Americas was dominated by military dictatorships. Leading artists like Sosa, poet-singers the Chileans Violeta Parra and Víctor Jara, and the Cubans Pablo Milanes and Silvio Rodríguez, were outspoken in their denunciation of injustices. They also encouraged people to return to the popular roots of their culture. But the songs were not all directly political - they also celebrated love, and the lives of ordinary men and women, whatever their race.

Sosa is affectionately known as *la negra*, because of her preference for black gowns and ponchos, and her long, jet-black hair. Her paternal grandparents were indigenous Indians from the province of Santiago del Estero, who spoke the Quechua language at home; and although not raised a Quechua herself, Sosa acknowledges the importance of these roots in her life and work. "*Vientos del Alma*" [*Winds of the Soul*], the opening track on her recent album *Al Despertar* [*To the Awakening*], for instance, has a strong Indian influence, and features traditional *charangas* (mandolins made from the carapaces of armadillos), and *queña* flutes. The lyrics are simple but poetic: "I am the night, I am the morning/I am the fire, fire in the darkness/I am the pachamama, I am your truth/ I am the song, the wind of freedom."

Pachamama means earth mother - and Sosa is regarded as a symbol of Argentine womanhood, a formidable yet sensitive and impassioned figure whose music draws on folk, classical, Latin jazz, and pop-rock. She does not write her own words or melodies, though some of the best material that she sings was specifically written for her rich contralto voice, resonant with the passions of a lifetime.

Sosa interprets the compositions of celebrated Latin American poets and musicians such as Milanes, Rodríguez, Atahualpa Yupanqui, and Caetano Veloso, and Parra - who was perhaps her greatest inspiration as an artist. "For me [Parra's] *Gracias a la Vida* is the most perfect love song that I have ever sung. I will never stop doing it. We must give give thanks for every day - not just because we love or do not love."

Sosa's activities in the Nueva Canción movement brought her into conflict with Argentina's military authorities, particularly during the years of The Dirty War in which many thousands died. During one concert, in the town of La Plata, security forces arrested Sosa, her band, and the entire audience. "A policeman conducted a body search right there, touching me on the breasts in front of all those people, just to humiliate me," she recalls. "I was wearing a beautiful poncho of sky blue and white, the colours of the Argentine flag, but that did not deter him."

The symbolism wasn't lost on her compatriots however, and Sosa became identified

with the voice of resistance. In January 1979, after repeated harassment, and threats of violence Sosa decided to go into voluntary exile in Europe. "Things kept getting worse and worse. It was more than just the military showing up at concerts: there was a direct ban on my singing. I had no work in Argentina - and I had no wish to remain as some sort of ornament for the left. My life is to sing."

Living in Paris and afterwards in Madrid, for Sosa the years spent outside of Argentina were difficult ones. For a while she even had difficulty singing. "It was a mental problem, a matter of morale," she explains. "When you are in exile you take your suitcase with you, but there are things that don't fit in it - things like colours and smells and childhood attitudes. And there is also the pain and the death you saw. You shouldn't deny those things because to do so will make you ill. We have a permanent memory. We must not forget. Those of us who remain alive can never forget the ones who have been tortured and disappeared."

While in Europe Sosa - whose maternal grandmother was French - embraced elements of the tradition of chansonniers such as Edif Piaf and Jacques Brel. Her outlook became more international, and she incorporated the musics of other Latin nations into her repertoire. "I had started as a folklorista, and at first had no interest in classical music or jazz. I

didn't abandon folk music, but I began singing some of the jazz-inflected compositions in Portuguese that I do, by Milton Nascimento, Chico Buarque, and other masters of MPB [Brazilian Popular Music]."

Early in 1982 Sosa, unrepentant, returned to Argentina during a slight loosening of censorship that occurred just prior to the junta's fall following the Malvinas/Falklands debacle. She defied the authorities by singing out as the champion of the oppressed - and she continues to sing for them. "I am not just speaking of Latin America," she stresses. "I have empathy for humanity at large - for all the people who suffer discrimination, who are destined to live with poverty, malnutrition, lack of education, scarcity in all things."

In recent years, the woman that many know as 'The Voice of the Americas' has received increasing recognition outside her homeland for her innovative and inspirational work. In 1995, a few days before Sosa's first Canadian tour, she was given the United Nations Woman of the Year award in a ceremony at New York's Lincoln Centre. The following year she gained UNESCO's International Music Council award.

The Manchester Guardian has hailed Sosa as "the voice to inspire a revolution, should she wish". But, despite the enduring strength of her conscience and convictions, she refuses to be primarily labeled a protest singer. "I've

never liked that term," says Sosa. "It's like an invitation for someone to put a stamp on the songs that says 'prohibited'. The intelligence of the artist needs to be broader in the face of such barriers. Besides, artists are not political leaders. I sing honest songs, about the way things really are."

Sosa's extensive repertoire comprises for the most part songs of love and tenderness, whether directed towards fellow humans or to her homeland or to humanity at large. And not all the artists whose compositions she interprets are Latin American. She's performed material by Sting, for instance, who's a big fan of hers. "I sang with him in Argentina. We performed *Fragile* together - and it was beautiful, very moving. What I sing at home is also what I sing outside. It is a proven repertoire of strong and beautiful songs. The love I feel for them is implicit whenever I perform."

"These are difficult times in my country, but there are so many youngsters writing so many good songs. I have a great deal of respect for the young, for those who question and challenge things, and always have. I don't feel old; I am an artist who is constantly adding, and so I have built up a portfolio that captures the flavour of the various tendencies of music in Latin America. My career has not been a continual search for applause but a personal musical quest involving change - and taking chances!"

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FOLK-ROCK REVISITED

EXPLETIVES DELETED

Consider Fairport Convention's *Leige and Leif* a landmark recording. It dusted of traditional British folk songs and tunes and restored them with the exhilarating vitality of...gasp!...electric instruments. Folk music has never been the same since. Eric Thom waxes nostalgic with Dave Pegg

There will always be an England. So, too, there will always be a Fairport Convention. Which is comforting to those of us in the 'Colonies' as they return to Canadian soil for the first time in over a decade. Formed in 1967, Fairport were the undisputed founders of British Folk-Rock at a time when the Byrds and Jefferson Airplane were redefining the North American musical landscape. Indeed, Fairport's early sound was a blend of both but, unlike either, firmly rooted in traditional British folk music and completely genre-busting by any definition.

A veritable British "Who's Who" of masterful Musicians have climbed through the

Fairport family tree to the point where the band's iron grip on their musical roots is the only thing that has kept it, after 35 years, from toppling over. Sandy Denny, Richard Thompson, Dave Swarbrick, Maartin Allcock, Dave Matacks, Ashley Hutchings, Iain Matthews, Trevor Lucas, Jerry Donahue. Fairport, today, remains more an institution than a band, and its real importance lies in the musical heritage it stands for more than who is in the band. Yet the current Fairport line-up is its own special hybrid: consisting of original members, Dave Pegg (bass, mandolin, vocals) and Simon Nicol (guitar, vocals), plus Ric Sanders (fiddle), Chris Leslie (guitar, fiddle, vocals) and Gerry Conway (percussion). And, although their current fare may have mellowed slightly with time, they remain masterful entertainers drawing upon one of the richest catalogues of traditional and contemporary British music. Each live Fairport show is the stuff of legend and world stages regularly serve up their distinctive and unmistakable strains, thanks to a wildly active touring schedule in response to the rabid demands of their devoted, worldwide following.

Penguin Eggs was fortunate to connect

with Dave Pegg just prior to the launch of their extensive XXXV Anniversary tour which will take in Japan, Germany and Australia in March; Canada and the U.S. in April and various acoustic dates around England in May.

"It's been about 10 years since we've been to Canada...we played Toronto and Montreal, where we met up with the McGarrigles...we went out drinking with our friend Kate." It's taken them some time to find the right combination of U.S. agents and promoters to make a tour financially feasible until now. When asked to account for the band's outstanding longevity (the tour coincides with the release of "XXXV" on Compass/KOCH, representing 35 years in the business), Dave's response is typically 'Peggy-like': "Blimey! Creditors (laughs). We're musicians and are all unemployable...we've never been too successful selling CDs and so we've always had to make our living treading the boards...it's also the most enjoyable thing for us - playing live.

Asked where the term "folk-rock" originated, Dave continues, "The British press created it - 'Liege and Lief' was named the first-ever English folk rock album. In America they were calling the Byrds folk-rock and we were considered to be the English equivalent. It's a good little box to put the music in because it was a bunch of rock musicians attempting to play traditional folk music with a couple of folkies. It's not rock. It's not folk. It's certainly not a roots album. Folk-rock - it doesn't bother me..." Despite Dave's modest perspective on the popularity of the genre they have helped to define, Fairport has built a huge following throughout the world over its lengthy history.

"Our music is different than other bands, with a strong Anglophile appeal. We used to tour everywhere in the '70s...we have little pockets of fans in the U.S., Australia and Europe who still remember us well...and we're still able to get to many of these places. We're more well-known in England than anywhere else. And in Scotland we can't get arrested. I think (our popularity) is because we've never taken ourselves too seriously - when we go out to play music, it's not like a classical concert. It's still a good-time band and it always was."

When asked about his favourite Fairport era or favourite albums, Peggy is quick to point out his pleasure in playing within the current line-up, and the blossoming of their



Fairport Convention



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Kasey Chambers "BARRICADES & BRICK WALLS"

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With her debut *The Captain* Australia's Kasey Chambers won praise from such acclaimed artists as Lucinda Williams, Steve Earle, Dwight Yoakam and even David Letterman.

On her new recording "Barriades & Brickwalls", Kasey Chambers transcends easy categorization without giving up an inch of ground in compromise. As Kasey explains it, "When we go grungy, it's grungier than the last album. But at the same time, I think it's probably a little rootier than *The Captain* because there are a lot of country songs on this album, and they're a lot more country than the ones on the last album."

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respective talents within the group context. "This line-up has really matured well...Chris Leslie has really come out of his shell as a songwriter. He's always been a great singer but he sings with such great confidence now and his songwriting has come on in leaps and bounds...And we're very happy with this line-up - it's a very different sounding group - it doesn't have any electric guitarist, which some people winge about, but every group's got an electric guitarist (laughs)! It's a pleasant sound - people say "Oh, it's a very mellow kind of mature sound, it's like middle of the road, middle-aged" - which is absolutely true, because that's what we are! You play music that you like and if it's like that to your ear and you don't like it, it doesn't bother us because we're not making music to jump into the hit parade. We're making it to amuse ourselves (laughs)."

The Fairport gospel appeals to a significant portion of the population. The release next year of "Unconventional Fairport" - a five-CD retrospective and the gradual remastering of much of their Island back-catalogue bears testament to the fact that Fairport continues to be a timeless, international musical touchstone.

With such a rich legacy to draw from, Dave has many outstanding Fairport recollections (he joined with the recording of *Full House* in 1970) and, during his Fairport downtime playing with Jethro Tull, before regrouping in 1980. "I have very fond memories of all the people in those bands and the fact that two of them passed away...you know. People like Sandy...when they go you miss them a lot. It can only bring back fond memories." As for favourite Fairport recordings, one of (mine) is *Rising For The Moon* which is an album that was made with Sandy and Trevor years ago. It's very difficult to come up with (answers) like that because you get so close to the music and you never really listen to current stuff because you just made it, and you've heard it so many times in the studio and you're out playing it night after night. It takes years to really reflect on what you enjoyed - I'm just into Fairport in the mid-70s now, in terms of my listening."

When asked who Fairport expects to see at their Canadian dates, Pegg speaks honestly. "We've never played in Peterborough or London - although I've played there with

Jethro Tull - before. If people have an interest in fiddle music or folk music they might come along, or they might remember the Fairport from many years ago."

And when asked what the hardcore - or casual fan - might expect from the show, Dave appears to know his target well: "... apart from the 20 topless dancing girls who come on before us and in between every number...need I say more? (laughs) We come out to play and put on a good evening's entertainment. We play about 50% of songs which more mature Fairport fans may remember - songs like "Matty Groves" and "Meet on The Ledge" and "Crazy Man Michael", which people really do want to hear from the group's history along with a bunch of new stuff - we get a kick out of playing new material. Our repertoire is absolutely huge now...there's so many things we can play but we try to utilize the talents of the people in the current line-up. Luckily, with Chris (Leslie) we get to re-look at some of the material we used to do with Swarb, which is why we've done things like *Now Be Thankful* (on the new album). It's a very good show - we enjoy playing for a couple of hours. It'll be nice for us to be in Canada - it's been so long. I don't know what to expect from the audience but I know we'll be playing well."

Whatever the repertoire, expect to discover the unique 'live' edge that Fairport is famous for. Newly re-recorded versions of "Portmeirion", *The Deserter* and "Now Be Thankful" will be featured alongside the usual Fairport recipe of new classics, rocked-up traditional numbers, socially-conscious folk songs, love ballads, inventive covers and elegant instrumentals.

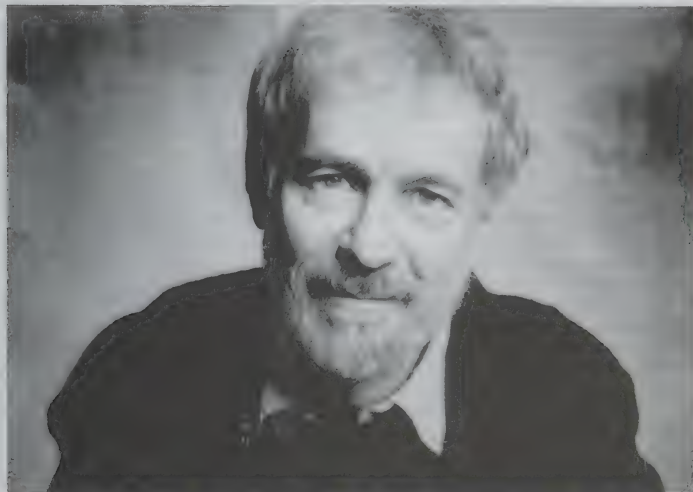
England's Mojo magazine once noted that "Fairport Convention are to real ale what the Grateful Dead were to acid." Add to this the fact that the band are as beloved by fans for their accessibility as they are for their unflinching generosity to any who share their vast musical interests.

Asked if there will always be a Fairport, Dave responds with his patented sense of humour (a distinctive part of every show): "I don't know - as long as we have an audience that we can play to and people want to come out and see us - and we're able to get into the van and get out at the other end without bursting our bags...yes! (laughs)"

Retooled Fairport circa 1987



Jesse Winchester



After a 10-year hiatus, Jesse Winchester released the wonderful *Gentleman of Leisure* in 1999. Produced by dobro wizard Jerry Douglas, it featured the likes of country superstar Vince Gill, The Fairfield Four and Steve Cropper – the legendary guitarist behind many of the Stax-Volt soul hits of the '60s.

Winchester, of course, moved to Montreal from Memphis to escape serving in Vietnam. In Quebec, where he still lives, Robbie Robertson heard Winchester's demo then produced and played on his self-titled debut LP. His songs have since been covered by the likes of Elvis Costello and Emmylou Harris. However, in 1988, he stopped recording, touring and dancing the *Rhumba* until *Gentleman of Leisure*. It got Winchester back in the saddle and out on the road – solo for the most part but occasionally with Douglas. Roddy Campbell met him in Edmonton.

Penguin Eggs: *Gentleman Of Leisure* seems an appropriate title for such a gap

between records.

(He laughs) I suppose that you're right, I didn't tour for 11 years. But I was working, I was writing songs, if you can call that work. But I married a girl that wanted to live in the country and have a horse. Finally she left and took the horse with her, praise God. I'm still in the country, and I went back on the road.

After the ten years, I had all these songs that other people had recorded, but I wanted people to hear my versions, I suppose. I had one more record due on my contract with Sugar Hill, so I thought I'd tidy up that loose end and maybe get my version of some of those songs out and see what happened at that point. I had so much fun doing the record that I thought, 'I really should do something to promote this'. Because everybody was so good to me and did such a beautiful job. So I decided I would perform again. I was so frightened when I made that decision. I didn't remember what key things were in, so I just started practicing really hard.

What was scary?

The scary part was that I wouldn't remember the songs, I really just had forgotten everything, it was just a long time. I'd been playing all along but performing is different. But I enjoyed that too. Because I'm older people are nicer to me it seems. They see my gray hair, and they're gentler with me.

How did Steve Cropper get involved with the record?

It was Jerry. I didn't realize that Steve lived in Nashville. Jerry heard the song (*Club Manhattan*), and Steve Cropper's name is mentioned in the lyrics. So that's what prompted that.

Obviously you were a fan

Oh yeah. I wanted to be Steve Cropper when I was a teenager. That was my dream, to play guitar in R&B bands. I had no idea I'd be writing songs or anything like that. I would have been happy to play guitar in a really good R&B band.

You Tickle Me is an interesting song. It's almost a throwback to the early '60s. I read somewhere you wanted to sing in The Drifters.

Oh yeah, I'm definitely a pop writer. I've never been a folk music fan, oddly enough. I'd never paid any attention to it at all. Then gradually over the years I've met so many of them, because people take me for one, that I've become fans of quite a few. But growing up I knew nothing. In the South, there really was no folk music. There was only R&B, and country music, and gospel, that was really all we had.

As far as we were concerned, Pete Seeger was a communist. I wouldn't have been really sure what a communist was. I don't think it would have mattered to me one way or the other what his politics was, but, no I didn't know anything about folk music until I came north. My stuff, I hear it all as pop – catchy with easy to understand lyrics, and melodies and grooves, and all that kind of thing. I really don't give much thought to it. I don't really know what the main thrust of folk music is – authenticity, or being genuine or sincere, I haven't a clue about that.

What inspired your take on Elvis on *Just Like New*?

Rod, I have no idea. It kind of surprised me too, I just sat down and started writing, and it sounded to me like the voice of a tour guide at Graceland, but someone who had known Elvis. It just sort of came out of nowhere.

Did you ever see him as a kid?

Yeah, we used to see him ride around town on his motorcycle, Elvis, he was just a big kid. He was a sweet man, I think. I never met him personally, but we were all crazy about him. He was a dear heart.

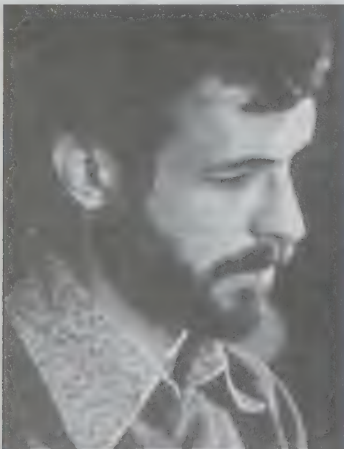
Where did you learn to dance?

I don't know it's just stuff I make up. My sister and I used to dance a lot, we'd go to contests and stuff. We danced to R&B. Memphis kids were into rhythm and blues. Memphis is fifty-five percent black people, that really affected us a lot, always has. So we danced their style more than we did country style. When you get into the middle part of Tennessee, and the eastern part, it's a lot more country. A lot more white people. Slavery didn't really make economic sense in their part of the state, or in the North either. So that's where the dancing came from.

What drew you to Montreal and Quebec in the first place?

Well, I dodged the draft for the war in Vietnam, and I, like many Americans, knew next to nothing about Canada. I didn't know if Ontario was in Ottawa, or what. So, I looked it up in the encyclopedia before I made my decision, under C for Canada. At the time, my encyclopedia was printed, Montreal was still the biggest city, and it also said that Montreal was the second largest French speaking city in the world, and that appealed to me because I like living with different cultures. It kind of makes me feel smart, to learn how to get along in other worlds. So that was really as superficial a decision as I can imagine.

When you first moved, did you see things clearer?



I think you're right, I think I did, yeah. Yeah, Canada, for me, is almost the antithesis of nationalism, and I love that about it. A lot of times, native Canadians beat their breasts about it, like, 'Who are we? Shouldn't we be waving our flag more often? And it really upsets me that we don't know the words to our anthem,' and all that stuff. For me, it's a good thing, I like that about Canadians. We don't make our decisions based on where people come from.

The Americans – by that I mean people who live in the United States – are different. Don't get me wrong, the things that they've done to live up to their written constitution are amazing – to overturn an institution like slavery and spend 500 000 lives doing it all because of an idea, I think that's remarkable.

Speaking personally, they allowed me and the other draft dodgers to come back into their country after 10 years were up, I think that shows a lot of generosity. But they are perquial, my own looking up Canada in the encyclopedia is the perfect example of what I'm talking about. Canada's just over the border and I knew nothing about it. So that pretty much says it all.

What was it like going back for the first time?

It was very emotional as you can imagine. I wept. I was so grateful to be back. I was very moved. I drove all around Memphis. The first thing I did was stop and have a barbeque. Barbeque in Memphis is different from a barbeque here, it's a specific dish, and here it's a method of cooking. I looked up my old girlfriend, and that kind of stuff.

Were you bitter?

No. War is like, in my estimation, war is like a bad storm. We've got about that much control over it.

What went through your head when Robbie Robertson picked up your demo?

I was just as happy as I could be, I mean you can imagine. I was delighted, especially Robbie Robertson, because not only were they (The Band) big, they represented to me and probably a lot of other people, a conservative movement in music, which I thought was long overdue. In those days we had 30 minute guitar solos that began nowhere and wandered through the middle of nowhere, and then wound up nowhere. They represented people who rehearsed. Their tunes just worked like perfect little machines, you know. Every part was perfectly played. It was music that made sense and was rooted in tradition. People weren't overturning their parent's rules and things just out of hand, they were really looking at our heritage and respecting it. I thought

that was great. So to have Robbie giving me this break, I was just, very happy.

Any favorite cover versions of your songs?

Yes I do. It's a cover version of a song called *Evil Angel*, by Ed Bruce, who wrote, *Mama, Don't Let Your Babies Grow Up to be Cowboys*, among other things. But he and his wife sang that song, this has to be 15 years ago, and they just did it right. It was so nice. I think to this day it's my favorite cover version. But, it's hard for me to be objective about it because it's my living, you know. And also my ego is involved in it so much, that I can't listen to it the way someone who wasn't so wrapped up in it would. So I have to like it.

What about Emmylou's cover of My Songbird?

Oh yes, she's beautiful. She's in another league entirely. I have so much love for that woman. Everything she touches is just pure beauty. She's beautiful to look at, she's got a kind loving heart, I'm just crazy about that girl. Yessiree she's a beautiful singer too.

Do you have any interest in putting a band back together?

I make a rotten employer. I really do. I just cannot tell other people what to do. It's just not in me. So as a result, I tend to sort of withdraw and that's not good. As soon as the show was over I'd run away. You have to be a leader, and I'm not a leader by any means. I'm just not. I don't want to be a leader. So that's why I don't have musicians with me. I'm happy to have Jerry come a long, but he doesn't work for me. We're equals on the stage. And that's fun, that's really fun.



Recordings



Stephen Fearing

Stephen Fearing

That's How I Walk

True North
PTN123

Seems like yesterday when young Fearing first waltzed over the Rockies, physique like a flagpole, immaculately deranged hair and a splendid LP to flog to all asunder. Fourteen years ago, to be exact. Christine Collister, Clive Gregson, Richard Thompson and Sarah McLachlan would soon appear on Fearing's discs. Fame and fortune appeared a mere formality. But then the best laid plans of rodents and roots... became somewhat waylaid by stints with Blackie and The Rodeo Kings. Now five years after *Industrial Lullaby* – his last solo studio recording – comes *That's How I Walk*. And clearly it's a quantum leap from anything Fearing's released previously, including that brilliant first flush of flash, *Out To Sea*.

Fellow Rodeo King, Colin Linden has his sticky fingers all over this recording. His gloriously gripping production propels the good ship Fearing forward with a refreshing clarity and maturity. No more uncompromising vocal assaults here as in occasional past recordings. Truly, there's a joyful accessibility to this recording despite a diversity that meanders from the colliery brass band slipstream of *A Town Called Jesus*, to the brief banjo instrumental hooley, *Meghan Haydon's*, and on to conclude with a tasteful, low-key reinvention

of the traditional party piece, *The Parting Glass*. Subtle and demanding tunes all.

Yet it's the raucous, sinuous, bluesy *Like The Way You Said*, *Black Silk Gown* and *Glory Train* coupled with *The Finest Kind*, with its Richard Thompson humor and phrasing, and the impressive cynicism of *Rave On Captain*, that will justly grab all the attention. While *Showbiz* might pass for schmaltz in lesser hands, its regimental drumming and haunting guitar keeps everything suitably off kilter and affecting. The impossibly sentimental, *When My Baby Calls My Name* is a rare misjudgment. But all told, *That's How I Walk*, fulfills all the promise Fearing's threatened for far too long. Immediate and irresistible, welcome it with open ears.

– By Roddy Campbell

Chuck E. Weiss

Old Souls & Wolf Tickets

Rykodisc/Slow River

SRRC 57

Fans of Rickie Lee Jones and Tom Waits will remember Chuck E. Weiss as the shadowy singer-songwriter about whom Jones wrote her only hit single and with whom Waits co-wrote the tune *Spare Parts*. But his credentials run deeper. As a teen, he toured with Lightnin' Hopkins, Muddy Waters, Howlin' Wolf, Dr. John and Spencer Davis. He delighted the L.A. underground with his gumbo of influences for decades before releasing 1999's *Extremely Cool*, a sardonic roots romp of blues, jazz, zydeco and rock. This is the fabulous follow-up.

Weiss has the beat up voice you'd expect in a white bluesman of his vintage. He sets himself apart with an attitude dripping fresh, open-minded enthusiasm. Vocals are handled like a percussion instrument in a trippy hip-hop act. A xylophone gets abused, tuba and organ are stripped bare. Styles mutate from track to track, with spooky New Orleans chants butted up against tender scat, rollicking R&B and syncopated rock guitar. It works so seamlessly that only the album notes betray that Weiss's take on *Down the Road A Piece* was recorded 32 years ago, with the late Willie Dixon. Flip this disc on during a party and the atmosphere shifts from down-dirty funk (*Sneaky Jesus*) to cocktail cool (*No Hep Cats*) so assuredly everyone will think you spent a month perfecting the transitions.

– By Helen Metella

The Co-dependents

Live Recording Event

Indelible Music
IM003

On a magic three nights last summer, The Co-dependents captured lightning in a bottle, recording their live sets at the Mecca Café in Calgary. The Mecca's a real roadhouse – two trailers stacked together with great sound and Southern barbecue. And the Co-dependents Live Recording Event is a real roadhouse record – great old songs with feeling, finesse and style.

The band roars through 16 tunes, covering Hank Williams, The Stones, The Beatles, Chuck Berry, Bob Dylan, Elvis Presley, and a kick-ass version of *Secret Agent Man*. Thrown into the mix are a couple of original tunes by Billy Cowsill and Steve Pineo that fit the roadhouse menu to a "T"

Billy Cowsill, (ex of Blue Northern, the Blue Shadows and the Cowsills) is the heart and soul of this band. And he's in fine form on this record. He sings like a songbird with emotion and feeling. Nobody knows this music like Billy. If you've followed his career you know he has a deep abiding love for these songs. And with the Co-dependents, he's made an album that, when it came out at Christmas, was by far the best of the year. It's an album to be listened to in the car, cranked up full, and to be sung along with at top of your lungs. Trust me, do it, you'll feel great. *Live Recording Event* is a lesson in how music should be played – with heart, soul, skill, and love.

– By Les Siemieniuk

Tri-Continental

Live

Tradition & Moderne
T&M 020

Bourne & MacLeod

Bootleg

Second Story Records
SSR#2001

For those not familiar with the Western Canadian music scene of recent years, Tri-Continental should prove to be a worthwhile discovery. The trio consists of Bill Bourne, Lester Quitau, and Madagascar Slim, each of whom is a songwriter, a guitarist, and a singer. Their music is infused with the blues although they certainly aren't just a conventional blues trio. The group has a fairly short collective history, with only one prior album to its credit, albeit a Juno winner, so this *Live* double CD,

Recordings

recorded in Bremen, Germany, gives the musicians plenty of space to do what they do best. For example, the album leads off with two Bourne originals that are nearly ten minutes long and the shortest track on CD 2 clocks in at six. Seven of the songs also showed up on the studio album. Quitzau is featured on six vocals and Slim on two (mostly originals) and both acquit themselves very well in that department. Ultimately, however, it's Bourne's distinctive vocals and the shimmering guitar interplay of all three that make *Live* especially worth checking out, even if a few tracks could have been pared down a bit.

Bill Bourne's innovative work with Alan MacLeod made some waves on the Canadian scene in the late '80s and they recently got together again for a "Ten Years After Tour." Since the duo lost access to their previous recordings due to the Attic label's demise, the two have put together a hodge-podge collection of old and new material, some at the demo stage. The album has rudimentary packaging and lives up to its *Bootleg* title. In fact, the front cover artwork looks almost identical to *Dance & Celebrate*. My review copy was defective in parts, which reinforced the initial impression of shoddiness. Fans would be better off trying to find the duo's previous two CDs, or Bourne's two collaborations with violinist Shannon Johnson for that matter.

— By Paul-Emile Comeau

Josh Ritter

Golden Age Of Radio

Signature Sounds
1269

Who ever said the alt.country coves had ran their course. Obviously nobody who had heard of Josh Ritter. But then again a square peg like Ritter doesn't fit easily into any old hollow. As much Nick Drake as Townes Van Zandt or Guy Clark, Ritter produces utterly exquisite snapshots of America's rural heartland. From the beautifully moving *Lawrence, KS*, to the dreamy deliberations of *Me & Jiggs*, *Golden Age Of Radio* is prodded along with a minimum of fuss — a plaintive accordion, a roll of bass, the odd tap on traps, but mainly Ritter's acoustic guitar. As whimsical as the Be Good Tanyas or Belle & Sebastian and sadder sometimes than the Cowboy Junkies, there's a private loveliness to the *Other Side*, *Drive Away* and *Song For The Fireflies* that ought to melt the heart of even the most grizzled cynic. Ritter's also a wry and succinctly gifted commentator. How about, "I'm still waiting for the whiskey to whisk me astray, I'm still waiting for the ash tray to lead me away," for desolation. While there's no disputing Drake's influence on *Come And Find Me* and *You've Got The Moon*, *Golden Age Of*

Radio is an assured, imaginative, heartfelt recording the likes of Ryan Adams can only dream. Mark Josh Ritter down as the first major new discovery of 2002. Embrace him wholeheartedly

— By Roddy Campbell

Natalie Merchant

Motherland

Elektra
CD 62721

Despite six acclaimed albums with alt-rock favourites 10,000 Maniacs, Natalie Merchant has remained a fringe solo artist ever since. True, she's a bit of a downer. On this, her fourth solo disc, subjects include an exhibit on the history of lynching (*Saint Judas*), the celebrity of psychopathic murderers (*Golden Boy*) and her pessimistic belief that love never lasts (*The Worst Thing*). Throw in the true story of Henry Darger, a Chicago recluse who wrote the world's longest unfinished book, and an ode to a 13-year-old girl emotionally handicapped by skewed notions of beauty, and there's not much suitable for toe-tapping. Of course, stark truth never held back Joni Mitchell or Joan Osborne. Merchant sells herself short with lyrics less powerful than her convictions. Only one phrase here sticks out: "Lately I've been satisfied by simple things, like breathing in and breathing out," from *Not In This Life*.

Still, her sensationally intense, riddled-with-worry voice is captivating. She has once again attracted top-rung talent to accent the slow, dark, melancholy with immaculately recorded undertones from the Middle East, Spain and the American south. (T-Bone Burnett co-produced, with assistance from venerable studio gurus Graham Maby on bass, Matt Chamberlain on drums and Erik Della Penna on guitar.). It's exquisitely rendered but a little too laconic to transcend the ranks of moody background music.

— By Helen Metella

Robin & Linda Williams

Visions of Love

Sugar Hill
SUG-CD-1068

This couple should win an award for longevity and consistency. *Visions of Love* is, impressively enough, the duo's 16th album, in spite of published discographies that list smaller numbers. Looking back at those first albums from the '70s on the small Flashlight, Symposium, and June Appal labels one can't help noticing how little the duo's style has changed over the years. Even Peter Ostroushko is still on board. *Visions of Love* doesn't break with tradition much but there are a few minor changes. For one thing, the album

was produced by Garrison Keillor, who has helped butter the couple's bread since 1975.

The concept, such as it is, was to have the duo record songs that they know and love but never got around to recording, including a few by Hank Williams. Keillor avoided all extraneous elements in order to emphasize the voices, and by so doing achieved a very traditional effect, with most of the tracks being done in one take. Robin does his first recitation ever in *After the Fire Is Gone*, originally a Conway Twitty/Loretta Lynn duet. The title of the album comes from the lead track, a version of the Carter Family's *Wildwood Flower* but with better lyrics. This is an effective antidote to overproduced new country as well as to flashy, high velocity bluegrass.

— By Paul-Emile Comeau

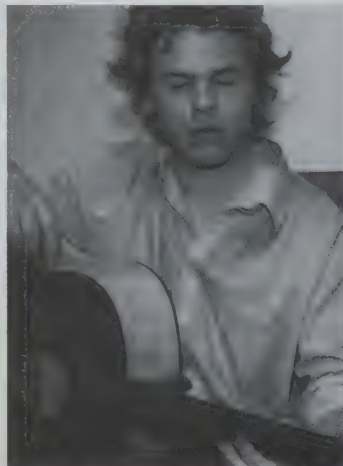
Billy Bragg & The Blokes

England, Half English

Outside Music
4018-2

Like Joe Strummer and Rory McLeod, Billy Bragg now takes a good hard look at what it means to be English in multicultural, modern day England. All three, of course, embrace their country's flourishing ethnic diversity. But while it's left unsaid, racism is the ugly, undertow that tugs at their hearts. Bragg's sharp and often humorous title-track certainly does the side proud. *His Take Down The Union Jack*, though, is vintage vitriol, all brilliant barbs and bluster. As is *Some Days I See The Point* and *NPWA (No Power With Accountability)*.

But what truly sets this disc apart from its predecessors, for the first time Bragg's writing for and with his band. Ubiquitous roots person,



Josh Ritter

Recordings

Ben Mandelson – he of 3 Mustaphas 3, Jali Roll Orchestra, etc. – clearly has the biggest impact stretching The Blokes from the Caribbean to West Africa. Their irresistible and infectious *Baby Faroukh* being an obvious highlight. While former Faces keyboard player Ian McLagan keeps Bragg's rock roots percolating on the truant's tale, *St. Mondays*, and the bluesier *The Tears Of My Tracks* about selling of treasured vinyl. Brilliant title, eh? After an extended visit to *Mermaid Avenue*, Billy Bragg's clearly back on home turf. The neighborhood's changed somewhat but *England, Half English* remains as formidable and enticing a setting since *Talking To The Taxman About Poetry*. Nice one.

– By Roddy Campbell

Michael McGoldrick and John McSherry

at first light

Compass
743302

It struck me upon listening to *Doinna*, the third track in on *at first light*, that Pink Floyd were remarkably short-sighted in not including an uilleann piper in the band; the instrument is positively psychedelic! In not doing so, they missed an opportunity to create some coruscating soul music of the highest order, which is exactly what McGoldrick and McSherry HAVE done. The natural successor to the McGoldrick machine's 1999 release, *Fused*, this new release strips away much of the synthetic polish of the earlier record to present a very uncluttered and back-to-basics sound. The former Lúnasa compatriots stick mostly to pipes, flute and whistle, and are joined by the

multi-talented Donald Shaw, Manus Lunny, Ed Boyd, Paul McSherry, and a number of other names that we are familiar with from other outings. The album was released last year in the UK and Compass are to be applauded for releasing it so quickly over here. It is a rather fine record that should appeal to all fans of Irish and Scottish traditional music.

– By Richard Thornley

Rodney Brown Into The Woods

Starsilk Records
SSDK005

Into the Woods is a comeback album of sorts. Rodney Brown first came out of Thunder Bay and built a very promising career when he first started in the late 70's. His first album *Freedom in Me* was released in 1977. He was part of that first wave of Canadian singer songwriters along with Stan Rogers, Murray McLauchlan and Bruce Cockburn. Brown played all the major Canadian festivals and toured the length of the country.

His life became travel, travel, travel – always away from home and family. Some musician once said – I play for free – they pay for the travel time. Brown had a family and decided he'd stay around and watch them grow up – so he stopped touring.

Now Rodney is back into the mainstream of Canadian Singer Songwriters. He has a real sense of place in his songwriting – he lives and writes about northwestern Ontario. And I love hearing Canadian place names in songs. Especially good songs. *Journey's End*, the opening cut features the great northern Ontario places of Batchawana, and the Agawa, Michipicten, and the Pukaskwa.

It's a mature album in all the best senses of the word. Brown also writes of family and love from a perspective of a man looking at 50.

Casualty of War is a wonderful a wonderful song for his dad and "the war". Ian Tamblyn produced *Into the Woods* and he did a great job in bringing out the best in Brown's songs and wonderful voice. It's a great sounding record with tasteful arrangements from acoustic to a full band with trumpets and drums. It's a lovely record marking a welcome return.

– By Les Siemieniuk

Tannis Slimmon Oak Lake

Independent

After years as a supporting member of groups such as the Bird Sisters and Benji, and as a backup singer for the likes of the Barenaked Ladies, SkyDiggers, and The Rheostatics, Tannis Slimmon has decided to take the lead, and by the sound of her debut

solo effort, *Oak Lake*, she's had little trouble making the transition. With the help of musical friends such as Josh Finlayson (SkyDiggers), Jeff Bird (Cowboy Junkies), Dave Clark (Rheostatics), and numerous others, Slimmon has produced a wonderful collection of songs rich in texture and emotion.

The greatest strength of this record, and at the same time, its most subtle aspect, is Slimmon's keen sense of harmony. By virtue of her layered vocal melodies, combined with the sincerity of her lyrics, you feel this record as much as you listen to it. In a few stand out tracks, Slimmon leads us from the simple, profound joys of *Maisy Go Round* and the choir accompanied, *There's a Lift*, through the tense *What To Do*, and back again with the hopeful *Why Can't You Read My Mind* and *My Body Moves*. It's easy to follow her. Accompanied by a subdued, prairie-flavoured arrangement of guitars, banjo, drums, and even horns on a couple of tracks, Slimmon's vocal melodies create spaces and atmospheres that draw you in. *Oak Lake* disappoints with only one track. *It's Quite a Job* is a brooding, experimental number where the economy Slimmon employs in lyric writing and musical arrangement fails her. The repetition of a handful of words and the predictable rallying between verse and chorus make this one a tough listen, right up until it sort of collapses rather than ends, clocking in as one of the longest songs on the album.

With an album of this strength, though, this is easy to overlook. *Oak Lake* is a beautifully accomplished debut.

– By Scott Messenger

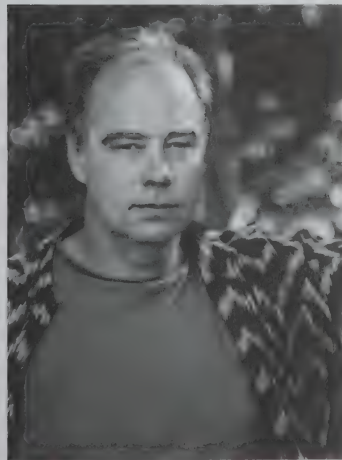
Various Artists

American Roots Music

Palm
PALMCD 2057-2

Just for starters. Palm deserve lavish praise for the beautiful packaging of this sweeping four-disc set made to accompany the PBS documentary *American Roots Music*. Bound in hardcover sleeves, the accompanying 60-page booklet includes wonderful historical photographs, well researched biographical sketches, a six-page essay and a cursory outline of the music's development.

With 68 tracks – 20 new and nine archived from rare film footage – this is an expansive project with an abundance of riches. As the back cover says: "This box set is diverse in its scope, democratic in its intentions, and dense with the riches." That it surely is. And not to belabour the point, but the exotic collaboration of Ricky Skaggs, Earl Scruggs, James Cotton and Marc & Ann Savoy provide *The American Roots Music Theme*.



Rodney Brown

Recordings

All permutations of country, with the notable exception of cowboy culture, fill disc one. Blues on two. Gospel and folk are combined on three. And Cajun/Zydeco, Tejano and Native American concludes four. While the large majority of the content predates the urban folk revival of the late '50s early '60s, it's judiciously selected and enormously appealing. Most of the performers, I suspect, will be familiar to readers of this magazine. Otherwise, the likes of Uncle Dave Macon, Dewey Balfa, Mingo Saldivar... will make fascinating discoveries.

Personal taste, obviously, will dictate highlights. Besides, a heart-warming, contemplative project like this does not deserve criticism for its content, but rather for that which has been overlooked. Willie Dixon, for one, stands out as a serious oversight in the blues section. The Byrds deserve their place in the folk category for obvious reasons. And the retro Uncle Tupelo, ought to conclude the country quotient rather than the space age meanderings of Bella Fleck. There's other notables M.I.A.: Odetta, Gram Parsons, Billie Holiday... but that must not detract from the fact that this box set is a wonderful testament to America's rich and peerless roots culture.

— By Roddy Campbell

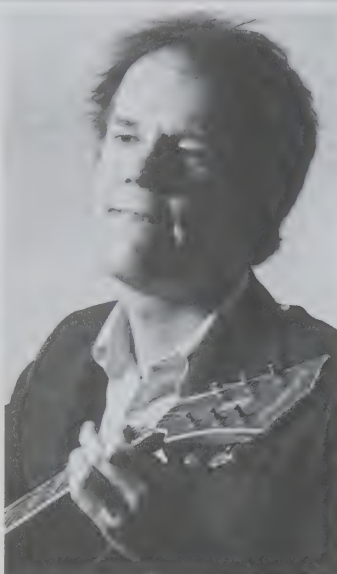
Steve Dawson

Bug Parade

Black Hen
10272

One half of the genre-blurring duo Zubot and Dawson, this remarkable acoustic guitarist's debut solo album has some of the same elements which characterize their unique music — virtuosic playing and an intriguing way of combining traditional and contemporary sounds. But while Z and D's music relies heavily on player interaction, here Dawson performs essentially solo fingerpicking pieces — originals and a few traditional tunes — backed with drums and bass. The tunes range from the New Grass-ish *Zigzag City* to the contemporary folk guitar piece, *Bug City* to a version of Blind Lemon Jefferson's *Hangman's Blues*, one of four tunes sung by Dawson. It's all played with exceptional fluidity and tone, and his slide work on tunes like the up-tempo *Casey's Revenge* is gorgeous. The only real complaint here is that Dawson's influences, particularly Leo Kottke, sometimes submerge his own musical voice. The title cut, for example, sounds like it could be an out take from one of Kottke's early '80' albums. Still, while it might not be as adventurous or original as the brilliant music he makes with Jesse Zubot, this is an impressive, engaging disc from an excellent guitarist.

— By Ron Forbes-Roberts



Loudon Wainwright III

Loudon Wainwright III

Last Man on Earth

Red House Records

As you prize Loudon Wainwright III's latest album *Last Man On Earth* from its jewel-case plate, it's easy to miss the writing behind — but it reveals much about the artist, and his lifestyle: "See the incredible last man on earth! A modern day phenomenon! He has no cell phone! No air-conditioning! No computer! No SUV!" Wainwright is a committed technophobe; or to put it more positively, he likes to keep his reliance on gadgetry to a minimum.

The title track of *Last Man On Earth* bristles with curmudgeonly and penetrating barbs, with lines like The best things all are worthless now/That's just because they're free. Nevertheless the principal focus for Wainwright's brilliant new album is not social satire but the 1997 death of his mother, and the wave of emotions, thoughts, fears and memories it released. Most of the songs were written in her cottage in Katonah, Westchester County, New York, where Wainwright went to live for 18 months.

The compositions shift edgily between wry humour and raw pathos — and often manage to touch both at the same time. *White Winos*, for instance, is a delightful song about Wainwright and his mother sitting on the porch of the cottage, drinking wine. He starts out telling us how: Mother liked her white wine, she'd have a glass or two. It's a convivial scene, but the glasses add up, and by the

penultimate verse Wainwright confides:

"Mother liked her white wine, she'd have a glass or four/Each empty bottle a dead soldier, the marriage was the war/When we blurred the edges, when we drank a lot/That's when I got nervous, when the glow got hot."

Wainwright has not only managed to retain his quirky integrity and independence on the music scene for more than 30 years, on the evidence of his latest release he's entering a vintage phase — matured in American Oak casks. So roll up, roll up, come see the last man on earth walk a tight-rope over a chasm of his emotions, the canyons of his age! Every song a winner! Nothing but mental muscle on display! Thrill to his sense of irony, his self-deprecating wit, his awesome grasp of the wordsmith's skill, his pratfalls and his subtleties, his insights, his nerve, his exquisite sense of bathos! Don't miss it folks, the likes of this album may not be heard in a while, from any songwriter on this continent!

— By Tony Montague

Archie Edwards

The Toronto Sessions

Northern Blues Music

The release of these live tapes some three years after Edward's death ('98) succeed in raising the profile of an often overlooked and definitely deserving Piedmont blues practitioner near the top of his game. The rarely-recorded Piedmont style (named for the area stretching from Richmond, VA to Atlanta, GA) showcases complex fingerpicking in which a melody on treble strings is supported by a regular, alternating-thumb bass pattern. A blues that combines ragtime with elements of country dance songs, included such ambassadors as Blind Willie McTell and Blind Blake. Yet Archie Edwards stands tall in this company and *The Toronto Sessions* speak to this authentic tradition of rural blues, captured in all their rustic glory. Surprisingly crystalline, this 'live' recording finds the spry 68-year-old in fleet-fingered form and his vocals are positively haunting as he runs through outstanding original tracks (*I Called My Baby Long Distance*) and deliciously reinvented covers (including the Mississippi Sheiks' *Sittin' On Top Of The World* and Blind Lemon Jefferson's *One Thin Dime Blues*) alike. Add to this the CD's exhaustive liner notes and rich historical perspective and you'll find this essential release as educational as it is thoroughly satisfying.

— By Eric Thom

Alpha Yaya Diallo

The Journey

Jericho Beach Music

It's a rare album that hits the tracks running, and never lets up in quality and appeal.

Recordings

Guinean-born guitarist and singer Alpha Yaya Diallo's long-awaited fourth release — his first for the local Jericho Beach label — opens with a dance song *Freedom*, and continues at an uptempo but measured pace through to the meditative, acoustic instrumental closer *N'Koro*.

The Journey is a work of new confidence and maturity for Diallo as a musician, but much of the credit for its excellence is also due to the various contributions made by of Ousmane Kouyate. The lead-guitarist and longtime member of Salif Keita's band, Kouyate coproduces and coarranges the album and plays on half of the tracks. Both *N'Koro* and *For My Love* are beautiful duets between Kouyate and Diallo, weaving together rippling melodic lines influenced by the traditions of the 21-string kora harp. *Mi Djedjima*, recorded in Guinea during a recent visit there by Diallo, features another duet — this time with longtime pal Doura Barry. Strange but true: some of the best West African music to be found anywhere these days comes right out of Vancouver — well okay, North Vancouver.

— By Tony Montague

Bruce Cockburn

Anything Anytime Anywhere:

Singles: 1979 - 2002

True North
TND 267

While it may seem Bruce Cockburn has dipped into his catalogue recently for new product, in fact, the 1998 live disc *You Pay Your Money and You Take Your Chance*, featured just six cuts, only one of which is repeated here. A previous live album appeared in 1990, but his last full-blown best-hits disc dates to 1987 — back when most of the copies likely sold on LP or cassette. So when True

North Records inked a deal with Rounder Records in the U.S. last summer, it was time to revisit the 26 elegant works of durable art Cockburn has created over 31 years. This best-hits compilation will be followed later this year by 18 remastered and repackaged back-catalogue discs sporting bonus cuts. But baring a raft of vault treasures, this overview of Cockburn's evolution as a folk-rock performer is beautifully sufficient.

It opens and closes with two new new tunes: *My Beat*, a peppy and observant paean to Montreal, where Cockburn now lives, and the title number, a wistful, loping love song familiar from his live shows, warmed here by gospel act The Fairfield Four. The chronological journey in the middle touches on Cockburn's impressive emotional and musical risk-taking over two decades. *Wondering Where the Lions Are* recalls his skilful melding of literate and populist leanings which made him both an international star and a credible rock radio staple. His visceral, gutsy reactions to war sting still on *If I Had a Rocket Launcher*, *They Call It Democracy* and *Waiting for a Miracle*. His singular ability to be both tender and brainy at the same time is ably expressed on *The Coldest Night of the Year* and *Lovers in A Dangerous Time*, while *Tokyo* reminds us that complicated metaphor can thrive in a catchy pop song if the writer is astute. Two cuts were remixed (*Coldest Night and Miracle*), but remarkably, only one arrangement sounds dated — *The Trouble With Normal* with its bombastic, electrically enhanced percussion.

For the many of us who have the most fruitful years of Cockburn's oeuvre stored in record jackets, this a welcome opportunity to rediscover its depth and distinctiveness.

— By Helen Metella

Rory Block

I'm Every Woman

Rounder
11661-3174-2

No one doubts Rory Block can play the blue — she's proved it on her previous 11 albums. However, on *I'm Every Woman* Block shows she can sing blue-eyed soul as well as anyone. Just listen to the driving urgency of the title track, an Ashford-Simpson song first made famous by Chaka Khan. The song is hypnotic in its intensity and insistent with its disco throb.

Block works out with a selection of minor soul classics on this disc, tackling Curtis Mayfield's *I'm a Fool for You* with a sultry tenor; passionately singing *Love TKO*, first made famous by Teddy Pendergrass; and ripping into *I Feel Like Breaking Up Somebody's Home* with a credible Etta James imitation. Her takes on more traditional gospel tunes meets with mixed success. The a cappella *Sea Lion Woman* with Saffire's Gaye Adegbalola is short and sweet, but *Ain't No Grave Can Hold My Body Down* is ultimately grating and shrill. Following that, the first notes of Al Green's silky smooth *Tired of Being Alone* comes as a relief. Overall, Block's first soul venture — backed by a crack squad of session players such as bassist Mark Egan — is solid, enough to warrant another recording of the same.

— By Charles Mandel

Mark Haines & Tom Leighton

Hand To Hand

Borealis

BCD 136

There's nothing particularly new or clever about *Hand To Hand*. It also covers some fairly familiar territory. Bob Dylan's *When The Ship Comes In*, John Prine's *That's The Way The World Goes Round*, Francis McPeake's *Wild Mountain Thyme* and Ervin Rouse's *Orange Blossom Special*, for example. Yet this unpretentious disc has an unambiguous alluring appeal. Mainly it's Tom Leighton's spirited accordion weaving its way confidently through a broad swath of original and traditional instrumental dance pieces. Multi-instrumentalist Mark Haines follows Leighton's flights of fancy like a feather tossed fearlessly by the wind. More's the pity he didn't add other songs than his gorgeous title track — a tribute to Canada's initial immigrants. Their arrangements are clearly resourceful and inventive. The traditional *Same Old Man* wheels and spins with a gratifying Cajun flair. And *Stompin'* Tom Connors *Gumboot Cloggeroo* gets a delightful work out to a reggae rhythm. All in all, *Hand To Hand* won't change your life but it ought to provide countless hours of listening pleasure.

— By Roddy Campbell



Mark Haines & Tom Leighton

Recordings

Willie Nelson

The Great Divide

Columbia
UMCF-4526-2

With his contemporaries such as Waylon Jennings dropping like flies around him, Willie Nelson is still going strong at age 68. But Outlaw Willie's latest album, *The Great Divide*, may live up to its name, if for no other reason than some of his fans will love it, and others won't. Who ever would have imagined Nelson singing a duet with Kid Rock set to gentle trip-hop rhythms, for instance? Not a lot of his older fans, who no doubt will prefer the new country strains of Nelson's pairing with Country Music Association female vocalist of the year, Lee Ann Womack on *Mendocino County Line*.

Not everything works. Nelson's crooning of Cyndi Lauper's *Time After Time* is just bizarre, and the aforementioned Kid Rock duet is forced. However, you can't blame Nelson for experimenting at an age when many other artists stagnate. And when the music meshes, it's as good as any popular tunes produced today. His duet with Matchbox 20's Rob Thomas, for instance, is exemplary roots rock, complete with a funky horn line, snapping congas and catchy harmonies. For the more traditionally inclined, Nelson's plaintive, emotional singing on the ballad *You Won't Catch Me Crying* ought to help bridge the great divide.

— By Charles Mandel

Geoffrey Kelly

Gringo Star

Basecamp Records
BC 8091 M

Geoffrey Kelly, a Spirited Western gentleman and sometimes Paperboy, is a man who looms large on the Canadian folk music scene. He has finally gotten around to making a record of his own, produced in Basecamp Studios (AKA his home) and plays everything here from flutes to guitar to drum loops. The tunes are all his as well, although they connect mostly to the Scottish and Irish traditions of which he is such a well-known exponent. All in all, it is a fairly relaxed set with some nicely memorable tunes, particularly the bouncy *Sunflower Girl* and *The Lonely Biker*.

However, the whole thing has a bit of an air of the film soundtrack about it, which is unfortunate, and a couple of the pieces veer into some dangerously easily listenable territory. I think that perhaps a few collaborators next time out would fix things but in the meantime this is an interesting, if not entirely successful, musical direction for one of Canada's finest Celtic players.

— By Richard Thornley

McGnarley's Rant

Fisherman's Pride

Jill Brazil
9224928

The Pogues, for all of their glories, have much to answer for. Their particular brand of folk-punk inspired many followers, more than a few of whom seem inordinately popular in this fair land of ours (uh, Canada).

McGnarley's Rant, from Nelson, B.C., are another such band, probably great live but turgid and uninspired on record. They rail and rage, yes, and liberally decorate *Fisherman's Pride* with some tasty distortion, breakneck rhythms, and gravel-throated vocals; but they ultimately fall flat with a set of Celtic rawk raves that mire themselves in heavy handed lyrics and off-the-shelf melodies. With a few beers under the belt this would make a great gig souvenir, otherwise, steer clear.

— By Richard Thornley

Ian Tyson

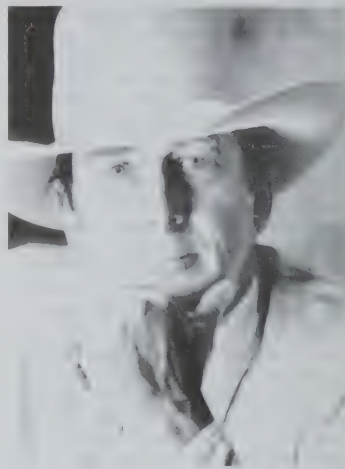
Live at Longview

Stony Plain Records
SPCD 1282

At 68, it would be easy for Ian Tyson to rest on his laurels. Most artists his age, if they are even still performing, are content to coast along on their greatest hits, playing their old familiar favourites to aging fans. Tyson could easily play the nostalgia card as well, singing old chestnuts like *Four Strong Winds* and *Someday Soon* to the grey heads who grew up with his music.

Yet on this album, Tyson either singly or in collaboration pens six fresh songs, expanding on the cowboy lifestyle and philosophy that has dominated his life, both personally and artistically, for the most part of the past three decades. Through albums dating back to 1978 - *One Jump Ahead Of The Devil* - to *Live at Longview* - Tyson has become one of North America's pre-eminent storytellers of western folklore.

The material is not for everyone. For some, the songs of cowboys out ropin' and ridin' can sound almost corny. Yet, unlike some cowboy classics that were written by Hollywood songwriters for the movies (*Don't Fence Me In*), Tyson's songs are real stories about real people written by a real cowboy. *Bob Fudge*, is about a Texas cowboy who helped drive 2,000 steers to Montana in 1882. Romantic? Hardly. "Smallpox and Comanches took most of my family. Left my poor mother and my brothers and me," Tyson writes of poor Fudge, who heads north on his cattle drive only to encounter more hardship and tragedy. "In the cold rolling waters and the wild plunging cattle, there was many a young man took leave of his life."



Ian Tyson

As with most live albums, *Longview* is not technically perfect, a small trade-off when given the chance to hear the songwriter tell the stories behind the songs. For longtime fans perhaps unfamiliar or unmoved by Tyson's cowboy themes, there's the vintage *Someday Soon*, still one of the great classics from the hand of a Canadian icon.

— By Bob Remington

Lori McKenna

Pieces of Me

Catalyst
CAT 5001

Boston native Lori McKenna received good press, good sales, and a few local awards for her debut album of 1998. *For Pieces of Me*, her second album, she is getting national distribution through a distribution deal with *Signature Sounds*. McKenna sticks very close to archetypal folk singer-songwriter fare, with very few influences from other genres appearing in her work, except for a hint of rock on a few tracks. Considering that she's a 32-year-old mother of four her style has been referred to in *The Boston Phoenix* as *Mommy Pop* but that doesn't mean much.

While McKenna's music may have its stylistic limitations, she ultimately does leave a favorable impression, especially because of her knack for cogent lyrics. Virtually every song has at least a few memorable lines, such as "I'm sealed by my skin, but broken inside" (*Never Die Young*) and "I have been a poet all my life/With not too much to say" (*Pieces of Me*). Her song with the sharpest edge is definitely *Pink Sweater*, a stinging denunciation of the infamous brute who killed a black man by dragging him behind a truck, "You are cold

Recordings



Penny Lang

but you boil/You are lower than dirt - and not worth the soil."

- By Paul-Emile Comeau

Chris Thomas King

The Legend Of Tommy Johnson

Act I: Genesis 1900's - 1990's

Stony Plain

SPCD 1279

www.stonyplainmusic.com

Chris Thomas King is a blues chameleon, continually demonstrating his uncanny ability to do whatever he wants to do well. From playing every instrument to perfection to experimenting with such divergent musical styles as acoustic blues to rap, gospel to hip hop, King has risen beyond the shadow of being 'Tabby Thomas' boy' (Excelling recording artist and owner of Louisiana's famed Tabby's Blues Box). He has clearly established his own distinctive voice as he mines his soul and lays bare his eclectic list of influences. Capitalizing on the success of *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* - in which King played the character Tommy Johnson (a blend of Robert Johnson, Fred McDowell and the real Tommy Johnson) - King continues his role as he takes us on a journey through roots music of all varieties across these eleven tracks. Acoustic and electric Delta blues predominate, quickly contemporized by King's enthusiastic delivery and infectious grooves. Stand-out tracks include the high-energy *Red Shoes*, the hard-rocking *Bonnie And Clyde In D Minor* (featuring an aggressive wall of instrumental squall) and the flip, current *Do Fries Go With That Shake?*. Tommy Johnson's original *Canned Heat Blues* is show-stopper while the movie's theme is reprised here, twice, in a solo and full-band context. Something for everybody but clearly something everybody wants to hear from this

considerably convincing talent who's timing is everything.

- By Eric Thom

Various Artists

There is no eye: music for photo graphs

(Smithsonian Folkways Recordings

SFW CD 40091

There Is No Eye is a wonderfully reckless collision of antique folk recordings that serves as a companion to John Cohen's similarly named book of photographs. Despite covering a time period of almost 40 years and including a wide swath of (mostly) American musical traditions, Cohen sequences the collection such that it unfolds in a surprisingly coherent fashion, each piece related somehow to its predecessor. The end result is a trawl through musical history that includes versions of well-known songs (the Reverend Gary Davis' *If I Had My Way* was a recent hit for Big Sugar, the young Dylan's *Roll On John* turns out to be *Nine-Pound Hammer*) and unheard delights (the camp recording of Sweets Mill Band's *Kitchen Girl* is a wonderful find). Two of the more recent highlights include the beat-out-of-time *So Long: Go*, which features the compiler's son, Rufus, and the New Lost City Ramblers' raw and racing *Buck Creek Girls*, featuring Cohen and Mike Seeger. Many of the tracks were also recorded in the field by Cohen, which adds yet another dimension to the combined experience of text/image/music that one would get with the book and recording. But the CD does very well on its own and you are strongly recommended to revel in its glorious subjectivity, particularly if you're new to the Folkways label.

- By Richard Thornley

Penny Lang

Gather Honey

Borelais

BCD 137

One of the joys of working in "folk music" is that it has a history and the elders are revered. Pete Seeger in America, Ewan McColl in Britain, and in Canada, among those who have lived their lives nobly in folk music is Penny Lang from Montreal.

In the 60's, when all this modern folk music stuff started, Penny began playing in coffee houses and continued her career for almost 40 years. There were bad times and golden days. And oh what days they were in the beginning at the Yellow Door and the Café André. *Gather Honey*, is a record of those golden days. A collection of bootleg tapes and archival recordings of Penny from 1963-1978.

It showcases Penny's wonderful, bluesy, gospel voice in a collection of tunes she has

performed over the years. Featuring songs by Bonnie Raitt, Janis Ian, Buffy Sainte-Marie. Those were the days my friend and this album paints an aural picture of them. It's a great album to listen to and muse on what it was like in those days in those places in the English folk scene in Montreal.

And the liner notes by Gary Cristall are stellar, telling Penny's story and the Montreal English folk scene story in a literate and compassionate way. All liner notes should be this well done. But it is not just an exercise in nostalgia, Penny's voice is joy to listen to and a good song is a good song. Penny always had a knack for finding the good songs. In an amazing long lived career of ups and downs, *Gather Honey* is a very high, high up for Penny Lang.

- By Les Siemieniuk

The Dust Rhinos

Live Sociable

Independent

STCD20322

The Dust Rhinos are all about bawdy revelry, drinking and partying. It's getting to the point now where there's a band like them in every town and I for one am sick of it. It really is time for a change. Second song in is a rock version *Donald Where's Yer Troosers?*. They also do *The Wild Rover* with the 'right up your kilt' bit and everything. Fans who saw it in the pub will take it home and dance on the table. It won't sound so good when they sober up.

- By Tim Readman

Don Freed and the Kids of Northern Saskatchewan

Our Very Own Songs

Bush League records

BL 13/14

Being in the music business, sometimes I get jaded, over critical, and I lose sight of why people make music in the first place. So when Don Freed sent me *Our Very Own Songs*, recorded with the kids of Northern Saskatchewan, well, it just warmed the cockles of my heart. This is the culmination of nine years of travelling across northern Saskatchewan for Don. He was songwriter in residence with the schools up there. They gave him a truck and a sleeping bag and sent him around to write songs with the kids.

And they came up with wonderful songs about everyday life in the north, and believe me life is different for them than it is for us down south. There's 42 songs to choose from dealing with just about every aspect of northern life - from town legends about ghost trains, to Kokum baking cupcakes - (Kokum's cree for gramma - you learn a lot of Cree and Dene words along the way through these songs

Recordings

Don's also recruited a bunch of good Saskatchewan musicians. Even Colin James drops by to do a couple of cool guitar solos. It is a record by and for kids and if you have any, it would make a wonderful addition to their collection. It's music made for all the right reasons.

Available through www.ourveryownsongs.ca

— By Les Siemieniuk

The Almost Leather Band

Another Picture

Spirt River Distribution

This Edmonton-based group is aptly named, more or less. The reference to 'leather' conjures up images of either a rock & roll band or a cowboy-type Western band. The reference to 'almost' could imply a compromised, ersatz quality to the group's style. Indeed, the group barely flirts with those genres but that doesn't mean that they wrap their sound in a glossy patent leather-type sheen either. The group revolves around Chris Smith, a guitarist/singer who is presumably the main songwriter for this band, although specific songwriting credits aren't given and he didn't write much when he was with Jr. Gone Wild.

Jason Kodie's accordion playing is the element that gives the quartet its distinctive sound. The instrument gives a Tom Russell/Ponty Bone West Texas feel to some of the material although Kodie switches his squeezebox for a piano on *Touring Blues*. Almost all of the group's songs are between five and six minutes, which hints ever so slightly at a formulaic approach to songwriting. The band is especially fun in a live setting and, even though *Another Picture* is a respectable effort, one suspects that the group has yet to live up to its potential in the studio.

— By Paul-Emile Comeau

Various Artists

The Rough Guide to Bollywood

World Music Network

RGNET 1074 CD

With a few honourable exceptions — say GlobeStyle, Luaka Bop, MNW — few non-Indian labels ever deigned to bother with the soundtrack to untold millions of lives. Recently a small flurry of Indian filmi saangeet (film-song) compilations has appeared whether themed on individual performers such as Asha Bhosle or Lata Mangeshkar or more generically based Bollywood panoramas. Most have ignored the bigger picture (all puns intended) to concentrate on the once-Bombay, the now-Mumbai film industry. *The Rough Guide to Bollywood's* anthologist DJ Ritu grew up in England yet even without her highly autobiographical introduction anyone knowing filmi's history could roughly date her from her selec-

tions. Nazia Hassan's disco-inflected *Aap Jaise Koi* (1980) was a clarion call for BrAsian youth to put on their dancing chappals (pumps). The cuts from Lata Mangeshkar and Mukesh or Asha Bhosle have a family favourite feel to them. (Bhosle is spelled 'Bhonsle', irritatingly echoing the Gramophone Company of India's piss-poor proofing that included Mohd. Rafie and Rafi and Gramophone and Gramaphone; Bhosle is her preferred spelling despite recent releases on a major). About five-sixths spot-on (too much Udit Narayan and Kishore Kumar), this is an excellent introductory insight into a popular music industry that can teach western rock and hip-hop a thing or two about money-spinning.

— By Ken Hunt

John Hartford

Steam Powered Aereo-Takes

Rounder

82161-0480-2

You'd think Rounder would at least have waited until the corpse was cold. John Hartford's eulogy was practically still hanging in the air when this compilation of mostly previously unreleased material from the banjo-playing hippie came out.

Steam Powered Aereo-Takes comes directly from the late '60s early '70s. The cover photo is hilarious — hippies Hartford and Norman Blake standing next to the very redneck looking Tut Taylor and Vassar Clements. Hartford's Aereoplane Band, also known by the oh-so Sixties sounding Dobrolic Plectoral Society, was one of the first to bridge the generations between young bluegrass players and its veteran masters and subsequently helped

spawn the progressive bluegrass movement of the 1970s. Thanks to Hartford, bluegrass was exposed to a new audience. Yet to look at the picture is also to wonder — how in the hell did this ever come about, and did Vassar and Tut smoke pot?

Steam Powered Aereo-Takes comprises mostly of outtakes from the *Aereo-plain* sessions, found on some 80 reels of tape by musician Bob Carlin while cleaning out Hartford's garage. It's an interesting album for students of bluegrass and an important one from a historic and archival perspective. But the material seems dated by the standards of modern engineering technology and the vastly superior musical ability of today's players. Hartford's voice is also an acquired taste — the man often sang flat. While there are some fine moments, there are also times when the material comes across as a hippie string band trying to find its way. A beloved figure in traditional music, Hartford died at age 63 in June of last year after a 21-year battle with non-Hodgkin's lymphoma.

— By Bob Remington

Ralph Boyd Johnson

Dyin' to Go

Independent

RBJDTG112001

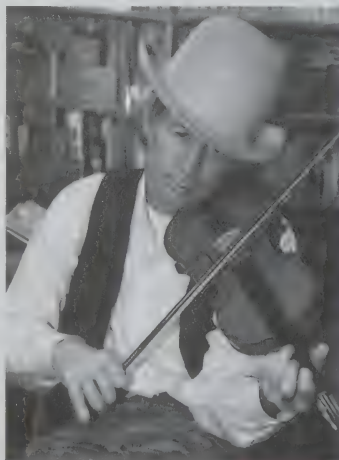
Ralph Boyd Johnson has been a fixture in the local Calgary music scene for years. He's been talking about doing an album as long as I can remember. Well, he finally pulled together the plan and here it is.

Dyin' to Go is a rootsy, ballsy, confident debut. Comparisons to Steve Earle and John Hiatt are bound to come up in Johnson's vocal style but he is his own man. He rocks, he moans with passion and conviction, and he writes about those alt country standbys — losers in life and love with a eerie sense of experience. From the opening drumbeats of *Mystery* Johnson takes us on a roots rock tour of his world. He also has the guts to include two terrific spoken word pieces — *Ol' Black Crow* and *Ode to Steve*. It could have been maudlin but they both take what is a really good album that one step higher.

Johnson has also assembled a great band, including such Calgary stalwarts as Billy Cowsill, Ross Watson, and Tim Leacock from the Co-Dependents, Thom Moon (ex of Ian Tyson), Tim Williams, the blues man, and everybody's favourite keyboard player Ron Casat. They provide the required energy and roots rock sound to showcase the songs Ralph has come up with.

Dyin' to Go: it's terrific. As a good a debut album as I have heard in a long time. Roots music welcomes a brand new voice. Look out for Ralph Boyd Johnson.

— By Les Siemieniuk



John Hartford

Recordings

Dale Nikkel

Still Learning Tricks

Frozen Prairie Productions
FPP0203

Quite a few composers and songwriters have paid homage to painters, with The Rheostatics (the Group of Seven) and Veda Hille (Emily Carr) being the most notable recent examples from Canada. Dale Nikkel, who moved from his native Winnipeg to Edmonton in 1999 (the same year he put out his first CD) brings a new twist to the painter/musician relationship. He wrote the songs and then asked Patrick Neufeld from Winnipeg to offer his insight into the songs through paintings. Reproducing smaller versions of the concomitant paintings in the booklet is certainly a refreshing change from videos, although both forms may offer equally subjective interpretations of the music in question. The artwork offers one more reason to miss the age of vinyl but the paintings are nonetheless evocative and more user friendly than enhanced CD technology.

Although Nikkel claims to have been influenced by the year he spent in the hill country of Texas back in 1992, his style doesn't have the grit that most of the songwriters from that part of the continent exude. Nikkel is a reflective songwriter and the production is sensitive to the songs but the fact that the album is so consistently mellow may limit its appeal. Nikkel's style has an indefinable quality that invites comparison with Richard White, another songwriter from Edmonton who was especially productive in the early Eighties, although White used different instrumentation. Nikkel may not be in the same class as that sadly neglected artist just yet but he's getting close and, as the title says, he's *still learning tricks*.

— By Paul-Emile Comeau

Duke Robillard

Living With The Blues

Stony Plain
SPCD 1277

Billed as his first all blues album since 1993's *Duke's Blues*, Robillard's latest release is sure to satisfy those who embrace his soulful version of electric blues. Along with a handful of originals, Robillard has delved into his performance repertoire to record several intriguing songs not previously captured in a studio setting. Fan favorites including James Cotton's *Good Time Charlie* and *Use What You Got*, a Freddie King standard, are given the full Robillard treatment with blistering guitar solos backed by fiery drumming courtesy of Mark Teixeira.

The title track, a Brownie McGhee num-



Duke Robillard

ber, includes compelling sax work from Doug James, Robillard's long time colleague. The brass work on this album is notable as James and Gordon Beadle duke it out on baritone and tenor sax on most numbers.

Vocally, Robillard is in excellent form, indulging in overwrought emotives ideally suited to his brand of powerful blues. The album's highlight, *Hard Road*, is also the first time Robillard has committed a solo, acoustic blues to disc and has me wondering why he has waited; the number absolutely simmers with fervour and pain. A full frontal, electric blues assault, replete with blistering guitar and drum fuelled burners, Duke Robillard's *Living With The Blues* softens the required intensity with a soulful passion.

— By Donald Tephlyske

JP Jones

Salvation Street

Vision Company
CAT#VCR1001

If John Paul Jones has yet to become a household name it's not for lack of trying. He actually started out in the very early Seventies with an album for the short-lived Windfall label but it got lost in the crowded field of mediocre singer-songwriter recordings. Since 1991 he has released seven albums, or eight if one includes the one he released a second time in a remixed version. It's unlikely that *Salvation Street* will be much of a breakthrough for Jones, but that is not meant as a disparaging comment. It's actually a reasonably strong album. The title itself hints at a spiritual streak (as did *Back to Jerusalem*, his previous album) but it's a subtle one.

The Rhode Island-based Jones has a soul-

ful and gritty singing style and he's supported by his band, a deftly rocking bunch of musicians called Rite Tite, with Les Sampou adding background vocals to a few tracks. A few songs are quite humorous, notably *Po' Man* and *Now It's Up to You*, the latter including references to Dylan, one of his obvious influences, and to Elvis. "Tiger Woods" is musically compelling but the song is a one-dimensional tribute to the athlete that doesn't shed any light on the man. There's nary a line about the fact that the man's amazing talent is being overshadowed and his reputation sullied by his unrelenting hucksterism for the Nike swoosh.

— By Paul-Emile Comeau

Lynoleum

Lynn Harrison

Lynn Harrison Music
LHM 001

Born in Dallas TX and raised in Winnipeg, Lynn Harrison has been a writer for *Sesame Street* and now she's a singer-songwriter. Hurray! She's a good one. *Lynoleum* her debut album is a wonderful collection of quirky, sensitive and just plain real songs.

She writes of things we all think about. In *You Don't Say* she writes of love and can tell that someone's in love with her even they don't say it. She writes of living in messy house, and wanting to uncomplicate her life. And she writes about, in the stand out song on the album, Einstein's brain being driven around in the trunk of a car.

Einstein's brain is on the Move
Einstein's brain with nothin' to prove
Einstein's brain with nothin to do'
Einstein's Brain enjoyin' the view"

Like I said, she writes about things we all think about, but in her own way.

David Woodhead produced this album and has done a tasteful job in bringing out Harrison's beautifully clear and wonderful voice. *Lynoleum*, it's a new and welcome addition to the Canadian folk music scene

— By Les Siemieniuk

Jim Layeux

Red Dust

Stemwall Records

Red Dust, the latest from Jim Layeux, veteran of the Ottawa and Toronto folk scenes, is a solid collection of original ballads, bluegrass, traditional and contemporary folk songs that would probably be exceptional if sung by someone else. Layeux's vocal style has been described as everything from "a raspy Rod Stewart" to simply "well suited to contemporary folk." True, for ballads such as "*Port of Mars*," "*Blue Star*," and the brilliant title track "*Red Dust*," Layeux's voice is perfect. The

Recordings

fact remains, however, that his vocal range is limited and that his many attempts to exceed it can make his songs difficult to enjoy.

Vocals aside, Layeux's a great songwriter. With a sparse accompaniment of banjo, harmonica, bass (Dennis Pindrich), and occasional percussion (Conrad Steam), Layeux's innovative guitar lines, most notably on bluesy tracks like *Breakfast Time* and *Straight Face*, infuse traditional styles with new energy. Apart from the plodding, sickly sentimental *Last Successful Heist*, and *Night is Always Young*," which is based on an unsettling shift in pitch and a guitar line nearly identical to *Breakfast Time*," *Red Dust* features fantastic writing. In spite of its flaws, the record constantly redeems itself with an inspired lyric, a unique guitar line, a catchy vocal melody. Even the queasy *Night...* has a chorus, for all its rasp and strain, that you'll end up humming to yourself. Jim Layeux's career has been characterized by hits and misses and this record, in the end, is the same way. While *Red Dust* is strong enough to be a sure bet for fans, for everyone else, this is a record that demands patience. Stick with it long enough and Layeux's voice becomes almost endearing, but until that happens, it's tough to enjoy the great writing this record has to offer.

— By Scott Messenger

Vasen

Live at the Nordic Roots Festival
NorthSide
NSD 6065

For those of us who have dreamed of making it to Minneapolis' annual Nordic Roots Festival, here is the next best thing, a rare gem of a live recording from one of Sweden's finest. Playful and full-on, what a show this must have been! Vasen are an acoustic four-piece, with Olov Johansson on nyckelharpa, Mikael Marin on viola, Roger Tallroth on guitars, and Andre Ferrari on percussion. The tunes on this limited edition disc are taken from various albums, although recent fans will recognize several of the pieces from *Gront* and *Whirled*. Where many live albums fall flat by presenting carbon copies of a group's studio recordings, Vasen strip away the studio gloss and come away sounding even more wonderfully complicated! Clearly energized by the enthusiastic crowd, they rocket through *Ploska* and on the extended *Shapons Vindaloo* Ferrari lets loose on a truly fantastic percussion solo. The only downside to the whole affair is the occasional unbalanced mix between the various instruments, but this minor fault is easily forgotten when the band gets cooking. Again, while it would have been better to be there live, this is a good second-best. Snap it up while you can!

— By Richard Thornley

Michelle Rumball

Terrain
Independent

Michelle Rumball turned heads and pleased many ears as the singer in acoustic roots ensemble Grievous Angels before leaving the band in 1991. Since then she lived in New Orleans for three years which influenced her music significantly. She is now concentrating on writing and performing her own songs. Rumball refuses to be constrained by genre pigeonholing, and her present repertoire encompasses blues, r'n'b, gospel, folk and country stylings.

For all the complementary things that have been said about her voice it is not one that grabs me. I listened several times to see if I could determine if I was missing something and for some reason I remained ungrabbed. The playing is competent throughout and the songs varied in style but unfortunately this is not a recording I could establish a real emotional connection with.

— By Tim Readman

Boozoo Chavis

Down Home On Dog Hill
Rounder Records
11661-2166-2

If there are two main styles of Zydeco music, then Clifton Chenier, with his piano accordion and blues-influenced music, represents one predominant style. The second, pioneered by Boozoo Chavis, uses a smaller diatonic button accordion. It is a rougher, rural, and perhaps a more French style, but no less rocking. Boozoo Chavis passed on May 5, 2001, but left his fans this last album. It's named for the rural area near Lake Charles where he lived, jockeyed and trained horses, and where the band rehearsed for these sessions. The chemistry is obvious. This isn't the post-mortem release of a player in decline, but a dynamite session by an artist at the peak of his powers. From the opening *Tell Me What You Want*, this disc cooks like a Louisiana barbecue. Even the ubiquitous *Tite Fille*, and *The Twist* enjoy a steamy new life. Boozoo may be gone, but he definitely went out on top. Great disc.

— By Barry Hammond

Rice, Rice, Hillman & Pedersen

Running Wild
Rounder
11661-0483-2

While many supergroup outings serve only to showcase the individual talents of the participants, this third collaboration between Tony Rice, Larry Rice, Chris Hillman and Herb Pedersen is the rare exception wherein a



Michelle Rumball

"supergroup" actually becomes a "group". A collection of classic country and western, bluegrass, folk, and pop-inflected songs, *Running Wild* is a relaxed, polished, and cohesive outing, the antithesis to the "new country" that has flooded our airwaves for the last number of years. They stretch their wings with a unique version of the Beatles' *Things We Said Today* and a superb take on the Louvin Brothers' *You're Running Wild*. Also notable is *It's A Long Way To The Top Of The World* with its spine-tingling harmonies. Still, this is not the perfect album that I know these guys could produce. The weak moments, and there are several, are typically lyrical rather than musical, suggesting perhaps that the group should stick to playing and singing, and leave the song writing to others. In particular, *The Mystery That Won't Go Away*, in which Larry Rice shares his feelings about the Jon-Benet Ramsey murder, is one of those songs that won't live forever. But that's why CD-players are programmable...

— By Richard Thornley

Alison Brown Quartet

Replay
Compass
7 4321 2

Brown's last release, *Fair Weather*, featured her deft banjo work on several original tunes in the traditional bluegrass vein backed by pickers like Tony Rice and David Grier. But on *Replay*, she and her band, comprised of electric bass, piano and drums, prance nimbly through 14 Brown originals and one cover that owe more stylistically to Dave Brubeck than Bill Monroe. The band is exceptionally tight, capable of effortlessly navigating the shifting time signatures of *Chicken Road* and the complex rhythms of the *Mambo Banjo*. Brown, one of the best banjo players on the planet takes several jaw-dropping solos, as on the

Recordings

flag waver, *Spiderman Theme*. She also plays some very hot guitar on a couple of cuts, notably *Daytime TV*. But somehow, beyond the technical fireworks and seamless ensemble work, the music here tends to have a slightly generic, clinical quality. It's all just a bit too slick and glossy; a display of technique at the expense of real edge, and as such the command inherent in the disc's title probably won't be obeyed by people who like a bit more raw emotional content in their music.

— By Ron Forbes-Roberts

Maura O'Connell

Walls & Windows

Sugar Hill Records
SUG 3937

This is the ninth solo outing from the acclaimed Irish singer, who first came to prominence as the vocalist for De Danaan. She's worked with everyone from Van Morrison to Dolly Parton. Known largely as a song interpreter, she's recorded covers of numerous acclaimed songwriters as well as working the traditional vein. This disc showcases her strong, dusky, soulful voice, keeping the backing tracks to basic guitar, bass, drums, piano, and the occasional flute. While the production by Ray Kennedy is solid and competent, it makes you wish at times for something just a bit more. It's just a hair too middle-of-the-road to really stand out

— By Barry Hammond

George 'Toofie' Christian

Pilli Lorgna N.I.

Coral Music
CM001

George 'Toofie' Christian is a direct descendant of Fletcher Christian of Mutiny On The Bounty fame. The Pitcairn Island colony founded by the mutineers was relocated to Norfolk Island (N.I.), a former penal colony 1600 km north-east of Sydney, in 1856. Christian was born on the island in 1949 and has lived and worked there all his life. Starting off in pop-rock standards bands, Christian began writing songs reflecting the island's history and culture in the 1990's. Most of them are written in 'Norfolk,' (pronounced Norfuk) an English-Tahitian creole language. The disc contains plenty of notes to get the listener around the more obscure phrases. The title, for example, means "sticking with" Norfolk Island. The music director, Denis Crowley, is a guitarist based in Papua New Guinea and the album was recorded at The Department of Contemporary Music Studies in Sydney, Australia. Although it's perhaps more of a ethno-musicologists disc, Christian has a pleasant voice and the music explores both western folk and Hawaiian roots in an interesting way. There are a few memorable songs. *Friendship* and *N.I. Blues*, in particular, could secure Christian a wider audience in North America.

— By Harry Hammond

Danny Mack

We All Fall Down

Dakotamack Music
DMCD 0101

Danny Mack: a revered and vital figure on the Western Canadian music scene for more than three decades performs solo or with bands — the Hydro Electric Street Car, Fireweed, and Alberta Crude among others.

Without a trite moment among its eleven cuts, *We All Fall Down* adds a significant chapter to his canon. Mack has crafted a release of compelling lyrical depth and imagery simultaneously troubling and refreshing, stark and detailed. The title track is central to the album's themes of hunger, redemption, respect, and hope. Here he uses metaphors of wolves and vultures to describe those who are out to take advantage of others.

Other tracks offer similar dark atmospheres. *Dreamland*, with its refrain of "think what life could be if..." is told from a junkie's perspective and *Buffalo Hunter* tells of an urban man's struggle with "cheap rice wine" and the pain of earlier times. *Live And Die in Fear* effectively captures the dashing of dreams and smashing of false securities and *Bobby's On The Run* has a *Darkness-era*

Springsteen spirit. Mack's lyrics are not concise but neither are they superfluous.

The most startling aspect of this album is that, through all the blood, hardship, and degradation, Mack's restrained voice and economical delivery is positively the opposite of, yet ideally suited for, the largely ugly and depressing topics. His voice has a more natural country blues quality than John Hiatt; whereas Hiatt sometimes seem to be singing to show that he can, Mack just sings because he must. And that may be the best reason to seek out *We All Fall Down*.

— By Donald Teplyske

The Varafumes

Throwing Shapes

Neon
NEONCD001

Scottish singer-songwriter, guitarist, Rab Noakes has been on the scene since 1970. Lindisfarne, Archie Fisher, and Barbara Dickson covered his songs. Noakes co-founded Stealers Wheel with Gerry Rafferty and in recent years has concentrated on his career with the BBC Radio running music and entertainment shows. The Varafumes is the name he uses whenever he puts a band together. This line-up includes Lindisfarne's Rod Clements on guitars and bass, Dire Strait's drummer Pick Withers, and harmonica player Fraser Spiers. This is a country-tinged album with strong blues influences apparent throughout. Most of the songs are Noakes' originals of varying vintage. Included are his best known song *Somebody Counts On Me* which stands up well to this new treatment. He is a good solid writer reminiscent in some respects of his colleague Clements. There are some interesting cover versions including a whimsical reading of Buddy Holly's *Learning the Game* and a surprisingly effective *Secret Love* from Calamity Jane which was previously a hit for Cathie Kirby. A solid album, then, of British, North American music that stands up to repeated listening.

— By Tim Read

Brass Monkey

Going and Staying

Topic Records
TRCD531

Brass Monkey features the talents of guitarist-vocalist Martin Carthy, accordionist John Kirkpatrick, trumpeter Howard Evans, trombonist Roger Williams, trombonist Richard Cheetham and percussionist-saxophonist Martin Brinsford. Carthy and Kirkpatrick have been working together since they played together in the Albion Band in 1973. They gradually met up with the others until Brass Monkey came together to record three albums



Maura O'Connell

Recordings



An assortment of Wrenfields

between 1983 and 1987. Those of you who are already fans will enjoy this new disc. Carthy and Kirkpatrick's guitar and accordion and their vocals solidly lead the pieces while the brass arrangements are reminiscent of a scaled down colliery brass band. The material includes traditional songs, original instrumentals, reels, 14th century Elizabethan dances, country dances and Ulster songs. There's an old-fashioned feel to the band which fans of more contemporary sounding folk music might find a bit hard to take. However, repeated listening is certainly rewarded as the subtleties of the arrangements and the originality of the selection of the material become more apparent. If you've never heard Brass Monkey then cast your doubts aside and give it a listen. It's a bit like Marmite really. Those of us who acquire the taste love it with a passion.

— By Tim Readman

Tom Wilson On The Radio

Tom Wilson Music
TW1L 20458

Calgary singer-songwriter, Tom Wilson, deserves good things from his third release. Although possessed of an engaging voice and manner, the best thing on this disc is the songwriting, which is of a uniformly high quality. Hopefully, songs like *On The Radio*, *Beer Joint Blues*, *True To Yourself* and *I've Got All The Love You Need*, won't wind up being poached by larger profile artists to promote their own careers, but will help establish

Wilson as a strong act in his own right.

While his work is a little too mainstream country-folk for him to land in the alternate country camp, any of these cuts would work on Country Music Television. He also has a touch of that classic prairie quality that elder statesmen like Ian Tyson possess. *The Saskatoon Blues* could become a staple berry-picking song for anyone from eight to eighty.

— By Barry Hammond

The Wrenfields 21st Century Pioneer

Independent
I22121P

This is Alt. Country music from Detroit City heavily influenced by Wilco and the Jayhawks, et al. All of *21st Century Pioneer*, is written by band members and runs the gamut from country-rockers to soft ballads. Noreen Novrocki handles the lead vocals along with drummer John Pyro. Neither singer really has a strong forceful voice which is a pity because some of the material would benefit from a more muscular and gritty vocal performance. A real highlight for is the twin guitar work of Matt O'Bryan and Tom Morgan who solo well throughout. Keyboardist David Berrymen provides some instrumental highlights such as his piano solo on *Rise Above*. The rhythm section punches along well enough too. Overall this is the sound of a good band needing better material and punchier singing.

— By Tim Readman

The Whiteley Brothers

Taking Our Time

Borealis
BCD135

When it came time to divvying up musical genes, the Whiteley family got more than the lion's share. Brothers Ken and Chris, not to mention their gifted offspring, have talent teaming from every pore and are, in their roles as musical ambassadors across all genres, masters at everything they set out to do. *Taking Our Time* is the natural follow-up to *Bluesology* and *Sixteen Shades Of Blue*, which represent the bluesier side of these like-minded musical maestros. Resplendent in their roots rich upbringing, *Taking Our Time* touches on all elements of their combined strengths: flavours of jazz, gospel, folk, country and blues are run through their personal blenders to render a 13-track, all-original end result which is as timeless as it is wholly authentic. Favourite tracks include the boogie-bolstered *Shufflin and Shaggin'* and the stylish, swinging instrumental *Full Moon In June*. This is classic back-porch music that never quite abandons the Whiteley's delightful jug band beginnings no matter where their fancies take them. As music that flawlessly echoes another era, it continues to demand an attentive crowd. If the Whiteleys, indeed, "took their time" making this record, they took just the right amount.

— David Thom

Eric Lewis

For Now

Applesed
APR CD 1057

David Lewis is an old friend and musical collaborator of John Wesley Harding. He made his debut with *No Straight Line* in 1996 which quickly dropped out of site due in part to the demise of his record label. He has continued his collaboration with Harding on this new offering which also features Al Stewart. The style of this disc is reminiscent of Stewart, Nick Drake and early Cat Stevens. And therein lies the rub. Lewis possesses none of the darkness of classic Drake but has plenty of that annoying elfishness in his vocal delivery that marked Stewart's and Stevens' more banal moments. (And lord knows they had plenty of them!). When the band rocks out as it does somewhat ploddingly on tracks like *The Rain Stops Everything* Lewis fails to follow them up the gear box and remains firmly routed in first. I'm sure judging from the press quotes that some find this work to be pleasantly whimsical but I couldn't hack it. I had to watch *The Filth and the Fury*, smoke a full strength Capstan and drink a quart of Barley Wine just to get it out of my system. Sorry...not my cup of twee!

— By Tim Readman

Recordings

Kris Delmhorst

Five Stories

Catalyst/Signature Songs
CAT 5002

After but two listenings of Kris Delmhorst's *Five Stories*, one realizes this artist presumes the listener to be an equal, active partner in the recording. Attentive engagement with her music is required – lay on the chesterfield, close your eyes, and really listen.

Delmhorst writes thoughtful, carefully constructed lyrics while retaining a stream of consciousness quality. Wordiness occasionally reveals naiveté, excusable as Delmhorst is only just out of her twenties; her convictions appear firm – solutions to life's troubles and hardships can be found by the end of a four-minute song! Bless her.

Rising out of the rich Northeastern US folk scene, Delmhorst possesses a Dar Williams vocal style with just a breath of Ani DeFranco and a gift for writing intriguing lyrics: "How can I carve your name in the trunk of a tree that'll be here long after we're gone? I can't even write it in the steam on the mirror," she sings in *Damn Love Song*.

Cluck Old Hen, lyrically revamped with a melodic treatment featuring baritone sax, banjo, and organ, now reverberates with an appealing groove lain down by the strong rhythm section. No two songs sound alike, an intelligent, vibrant amalgam of flowing styles and influences – one song has a sparse, jazz mood – *Just What I Meant* – another heart wrenching singer songwriter angst – *Garden Rose* – followed by a bluegrass soul romp – *Mean Old Wind*.

Typifying her DIY-with-the-support-of-

friends' (including Catie Curtis) convictions, Delmhorst describes the recording of *Five Stories* as a "barn-raising." The multiple textures of her recording affirm this as does the final contributions of the listener – the project isn't complete until the last note has been absorbed and appreciated. I cannot wait for her next album.

– By Donald Teplyske

Roy Acuff

The Good News According to Mr. Roy Acuff

Audium Records
AUD-CD 8128

In those happy days before our favourite kind of music was seduced by the soulless banalities of pop, every country singer worth the price of admission had a few good, solid gospel tunes in his back pocket. No show would be complete with at least one. There is, of course, no one better at delivering these than the late Roy Acuff, the king of country music who was once dubbed "The Backwoods Sinatra."

Acuff, whose first big hit came in the 1930s with *The Great Speckled Bird* sings these songs without even a hint of irony? He knew that we're all sinners, but that true redemption was ahead for the righteous and the holy. These tunes make us smile now, but there is no denying that they are powered by a profound faith and honest emotion.

Many of the very best are on the 18-song collection, including the *Wait for the Light to Shine*, *Will the Circle Be Unbroken* and the Hank Williams classic *I Saw the Light*. Nevertheless, it's impossible not to listen and chuckle just a bit at *Dust On the Bible*, a song which demands that we turn to the Good Book for salvation, and *The Automobile of Life* which compares a sinless life with a lube job.

– By Marc Horton

Fiddler's Bid

Da Farder Ben Da Welcomer

Greentrax
CDTRAX218

Shetland band Fiddlers' Bid, formed in 1991, are leading exponents of the Islands' rich fiddle tradition. Fronted by four top young fiddlers and backed by a driving rhythm section, the band perform a dynamic selection of high energy reels, jigs and haunting airs. Their original arrangements of old, new and original tunes make this disc a delight to listen to. The quality of playing is unquestionably high. The exuberant *Zander the Sander* set soars while complex timing holds the soloists into a tight but unrestricting rhythm. The title track starts with solo fiddle and builds into a lively jig as fiddles, harp and guitar join in. *The Pumping Bass* features a cool

rhythm guitar part and then fiddles sweep in and drive the melody along. The CD closes with a beautiful harp tune called *The Swan* written by harpist Catriona McKay in honour of a restored 18th century Fifie fishing vessel. Fiddler's Bid have been together for 10 years and with this line-up still intact after five things bode very well for their continuing progress and developing musical excellence long into the future.

– By Tim Readman

PipeDown

The First Measure

Greentrax
CD Trax 220

There is absolutely no doubt in my mind that Greentrax Records is fast becoming the label of choice for stellar folk pipe music.

Earlier CDs from Iain MacInnes, Gary West and now a new release from a group called PipeDown certainly confirm this. First of all, the individual playing is outstanding; each member has a good handle on their individual instruments. Second, their ensemble playing is tight, right on the beat and never wavers.

There is some very cool arranging; harmonies put in at the right spots as well as places you might not expect. Which brings me to the reason why this recording works so well. In a word: variety. It can be a difficult task to keep an instrumental disc interesting from start to finish, especially if it is not punctuated by a vocal track here or there. Not a problem with *The First Measure* as there is so much variety in tune selection and the structure of the arranging. Included are some of the classics by composers such as Donald Macleod; contemporary pieces by authors such as Hamish Moore; tunes of different nationalities, Breton, Scottish, Irish and Bulgarian. For pipe lovers, this is an absolute must buy and perhaps might win over a few non-pipe lovers as well.

– By Rob Menzie

Stewart MacDougall

Heresay

Trouble Clef
TC102

From his days working with k.d. lang and Ian Tyson on through his years as the driving force of the Great Western Orchestra.

MacDougall has consistently presented his version of western folk music – warm in tone, rich in expression – only when satisfied that the music is ready; there is no thought of releasing material just for the sake of having fresh product on the shelves.

Eagerly anticipated, *Heresay* is only MacDougall's second solo release and follows 1999's well received *Gathering Time*.

One trademark of MacDougall's sound is the keyboard touches he so elegantly weaves



Roy Acuff

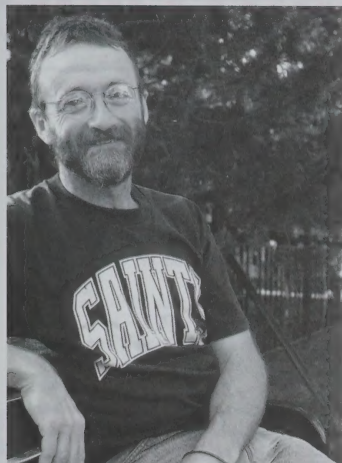


Photo: Scott Sandeman-Allen
David Francey
Red-Winged Blackbird: the background notes

When we first moved from Scotland to Cornwall, Ontario, my family would spend Sundays in the car, singing songs from back home and exploring the St. Lawrence Seaway. I remember seeing the Red-Winged Blackbirds nesting in the rushes by the Seaway side, the first birds to return after winter, or so it seemed to me. I think it was their call across the still frozen landscape and the blaze of colour from their wing markings that made them stand out among the pale and drawn shades of winter. I came to associate them with the coming of spring, and consequently the renewal of hope. I think of them in those terms still. I heard them one spring morning after a particularly long and difficult winter, at a time in my life when the promise and joy of Spring was sorely needed.

— David Francey

Penguin Eggs is determined to cultivate and strengthen an interest in folk music in Canada by printing score sheets to character contemporary songs considered written in a traditional style. This being our Spring Issue, what better song to feature than David Francey's delightful ode to the changing of the seasons, Red-Winged Blackbird. It can be found on his wonderful debut disc, Torn Screen Door. James Keelaghan also covers it on his new release, Home. David's version is available through Festival Distribution (www.festival.bc.ca) and Laker Music (www.davidfrancey.com). Much thanks to David for allowing us its use and also to Dave Clarke for transcribing the score.

— Roddy Campbell

with traditional country instruments such as pedal steel. Light but integral drumming along with accordion and cello help solidify the unique but very effective western and folk aural canvases MacDougall and co-producer Colin Lay create.

MacDougall's lush voice has a familiarity — shades of Ron Hynes and Garnet Rogers — that draws the listener in. Several of the songs included on *Heresay* will be known to MacDougall aficionados including *Zydeco Began*, *Buffalo Ground*, and the lead off track, *Away I Will Be* which recalls his Maritime roots.

Recorded over the last two years, included is a song written with Ian Tyson (*If Memory Serves Me*) that contains the line "If she forgives me, it won't be the first time she's believed me" that is all too telling in its directness. *Crossing Alone* has an evocative percussive base providing a shuffle feel warmed by the addition of Billy Cowsill and the Chordinaires's backing 'Oooohs.'

Heresay is sure to satisfy both longtime fans and those fortunate enough to discover, for the first time, MacDougall's understated but significant talents

— By Donald Teplyske

Phamie Gow Lammermuir

Greentrax
CDTRAX224

Lammermuir is a suite of music and song commissioned by the Celtic Connection Festival's 'New Voices' and recorded live in Glasgow's Royal Concert Hall in January 2000. Phamie Gow was brought up in the foothills of the Lammermuirs in the Borders of Scotland and it is her experiences of the past and present in that area that inspire this recording. It was conceived, orchestrated and performed by Gow and a small ensemble of musicians when she was 19. It moves between traditional sounding and more classically influenced motifs. The general pace is gentle and the mood melancholic throughout.

The main instruments featured are Gow's clarsach (Scottish harp) and piano, Alisdair Fraser's fiddle and Mike Chia's cello complemented at various stages by Cor Anglais, Oboe and Uilleann pipes. She manages to convey a sense of place and atmosphere with evocative use of instrumentation and arrangement. This is a well conceived and quite beautiful recording for those moments of much needed soothing and mournful tranquility.

— By Tim Readman

Johnny Jones Blues In The House

NorthernBlues Music

Johnny Jones The Memphis-weaned, Nashville-schooled blues journeyman has taken the road less travelled and, at age 66,

presents a craft honed to a velvety sheen. Valuable exposure to the great names of '50's Chicago blues: Junior Wells, Freddie King, rubbed off across various projects, but his minor taste of the limelight (his King Casuals recorded for Peachtree in the late '60's) couldn't overcome his frustration with a lack of financial or artistic success, which eventually took its toll. He all but retired from the business by the late '70's until he was rescued from oblivion some twenty years later.

Hailed in Europe and recording new material, Jones plays what can only be called "gentleman's blues". Economical, yet soulful, his guitar lines are a sophisticated study in cool, tasteful restraint while his vocals are equally smooth and calmly passionate in a controlled, confident manner. But, when he sings he's "Dangerous", you'd better believe it. The danger is found in the seasoned session guitarist's ability to infuse his blues with elements of jazz, R & B and enough Nashville spark to make each track go down like a tall drink of cool water.

Stand-out contributions on keyboards (Billy Earheart) and one-man horn section (Dennis Taylor) add dashes of uptown funk to what is, by any standards, a welcome return to a career that deserves to stay out of the kitchen that almost ended his sweet contribution.

— By Eric Thom

Tony Joe White The Beginning

Audium Records
AUD-CD 8139

Honest, true songs, honestly played make this the sort of CD that demands to be heard over and over again.

Louisiana veteran Tony Joe White, who's been around since 1969 after scoring a major hit with *Polk Salad Annie*, proves again that he's still the top *Swamp Dog* with this blues-inflected 11-song disc that's alternately dark and, even, blackly comic.

We've all had Monday mornings like the one that probably inspired *Going Back to Bed*, a tune that perfectly captures that lowdown feeling of another week beginning.

The best cut, though, is *Rebellion*, a from-the-heart song about the commercialism of music and one man's stand against it.

As the song says:

Everybody is getting tired
Pushing buttons on the radio
Where was it wrote down
They got to ram it down our throats....
"I might wanna rock,
"Or play the blues all night long.
I'm in this for life,
I didn't come here for just one song."

Indeed not. After more than three decades in the business, Tony Joe White shows he still has plenty more where that came from.

— By Marc Horton

Live

Michel & Martina Sorbara
Myer Horowitz Theatre, Edmonton, AB

February 2, 2002

By Kimalle Picard

Let's get this out in the open and be done with it: Danny Michel is the only Canadian that makes me nervous. I'm dawning a perma-blush, am shaking like I've had too much caffeine, and become so unnecessary that I arrive late for Martina Sorbara's set. Reviewer credibility: GONE. Yours truly is not used to the proper theatre shows and their time distinctions on the tickets that are no lie. No kidding!

Ms. Sorbara, for the last two numbers I managed to see, were incidentally my favorites. Would I be so far out of line to say that she reminded me of an angel sans halo and wings? Or Supervixen with lyrics like "you can call me any name/ as long as it's profane". The encore consisted of the Dolly Parton song, which was a delight indeed. Martina, as Danny nudged in, takes the DIY route to the extreme by making her own guitars. Insert "I am not worthy" bows here. Ms. Sorbara exists stage right to a standing ovation. You done us proud.

Danny creeps onto the stage like he's an intruder. The subdued giggles start already. The stage lights go up and there he is on his own in a Fifth Element orange shirt and disheveled hair. Whoever in the Myer Horowitz that night that were not familiar with the Danny Experience were in for just that. Even if you've seen him before, he always brings something new to the table; like a movie you've seen a million times but continue to notice new things with every viewing. "This next song is about Toledo. It's called... 'Toledo'". Aww. "See, my mum says 'just play, don't talk'". He's got a good sense o' humour on him. The next song, about Brad Pitt's stalker (no, really), *Coalmine* matches Blondie's *One Way or Another*. The stalker song does not describe me, by the way.

Songs from *Fibsville* ensue with *Drown* (sigh), *The Smell of Gas* (about a hearse), and *Souvenir* (as in, "let me be your..."). Danny explained the idea of how heavy metal was the "evil" music back then and now it's, yes, Country. Haa! He threw the next song to *Old Tattoo* which is lovely, actually, despite it's evil countryness. It's one of those songs where you gotta sit down in case your legs give away. Check.

Next is tempting fate with Danny's lake story if you've heard that one. Cheating death-by-nature when he fell through some ice and hitting the bottom of the lake, chest deep. Whew. We can't afford to lose Danny! With eight lives left, this leads us to *We're Gonna Be Alright*, also about fate. The nightmarish

images in *Fireworks* reminds me of my last workplace. Sadly. Scary stuff. Human Drum Machine in the house with new song *Perfect*: "nobody move, this is perfect/ it's just like you". The next new "un I couldn't interpret a title, but here goes the line "and maybe we could slip away and leave the world behind us". The lowered house lights are good for grinning fools like moi. *Elgin Ave.* (streeeeet!) starts, not before Danny asks if anyone is from Ottawa. "WOO!" Auuuuh, just me? Dead silence and Danny mocks getting up to leave "okay, goodnight!". During his questionable piano playing he shifts on the piano bench and you hear a beautiful yet abhorrently displaced sound of glass shattering. Rocknroll!!! Danny's drink on the bench fell off. Derrrr. He cringes, we cringe (and chuckle). Bless him. For the encore he takes pictures of the audience. He sets the camera back down on the amp, goes back to the mic to start the Los Lobos cover, and FLASH. This is the hilarity that happens when you're in the same room as him. It endears him so. The camera went off on automatic and took a picture of the ceiling. His stage presence is just as engaging as his music.

That said, go see Danny next time around if you haven't already, and see him again if you have. You'll radiate a nifty glow afterwards. I think I still have the perma-blush. True story!

Celtic Connections Festival

Glasgow, Scotland

January 16 – February 3, 2002

By Maria Dunn

A surefire cure for jetlag: crystal clear tunes from Jennifer and Hazel Wrigley, followed by the fiery and equally delightful fiddle/guitar duo from Denmark, Harald Hauguaard and Alfred Morton Hoirup, finish with the irresistible horns, fiddle and accordion of Quebec's La Bottine Souriante and the fluid, joyful footwork of Sandy Silva.

Robbie Burns' night found me sitting rapt (and well wrapped!) in the chilly caverns of the historic Glasgow Cathedral listening to some very fine traditional singing from Elspeth Cowie on Scots and Burns' songs and Ishbel MacAskill from Lewis on Gaelic songs. Straightforward and beautifully unaffected—a song's a song for a' that!

Basque accordionist Kepa Junkera received a standing ovation for his lively, stunning concert which included a guest vocalist from the other Basque band at the festival, Albolka, and a pair of percussionists who worked as a team to seamlessly play a giant wooden xylophone.

Manchester flute, whistle and Irish pipes player Michael McGoldrick and his bandmates

were a virtuosic force to be reckoned with on the concert stage and at the late night Festival club.

The Waterboys (Mike Scott with Steve Wickham and piano player) drew material from their more Celtic repertoire in a magical acoustic evening, including the unrehearsed *A Man Is In Love*, agreeably sung on request ("only in Glasgow") from the vociferous audience.

Tim O'Brien and John McCusker did everyone a huge musical favour by assembling the cream of the crop in Celtic music today for their concert in the Old Fruit Market: Karan Casey and Kate Rusby as guest lead and backing vocalists, Niall Vallely (concertina), John Doyle (guitar), Michael McGoldrick (flute/whistles), Ian McDonald (flute/pipes), Kris Drever (upright bass), John Joe Kelly (bodhran). At one point in *The Crossing* set, Tim O'Brien and Karan Casey did a spine-tling version of an Appalachian song. It was also a pleasure to hear a set devoted to McCusker's own material; he, himself, is a delightful host with his brilliant sense of humour.

To top it all off, the nightly Festival Club featured short surprise sets from many of the festival acts as well as some worthy up-and-comers: Fine Friday, a trio (guitar, whistle, fiddle) from Edinburgh with original compositions and interesting arrangements of traditional and contemporary tunes and songs. Broilum, an high energy band of twin fiddles, whistle, bodhran, guitar and bass, with some beautiful and spirited Scottish Gaelic singing.

Kate Rusby at Celtic Connections



Photo: Frank Gasparik

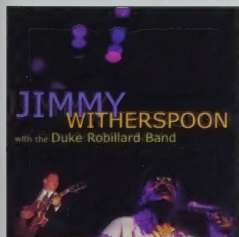
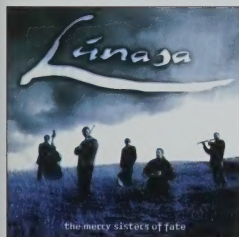
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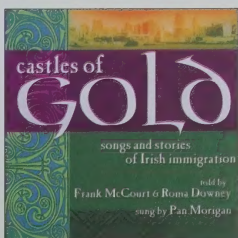
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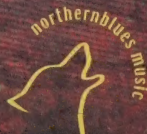
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